

THE SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE

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To

Dr. ZAKIR HUSAIN

*(Principal of the National Muslim University, Delhi)
who is quietly shaping the School of the Future while
others may at best talk about it—as a slight token of
affection and respect.*

PREFACE

In publishing this collection of educational essays an apology seems hardly necessary, for there is an undoubted paucity of educational literature in our country and it is the business of those who are engaged in various types of educational work to give clear, unambiguous expression to their views and experiences. Because of the nature and associations of my own work, my interest lies principally in problems of school education and of the education of teachers. It is primarily with these that this book is concerned.

The First Part of the book attempts to give a picture, in outline, of the School of the Future, as I visualize it. In sketching its 'portrait', however, I have given more thought to the elucidation of the educational principles underlying it than to the painting of its detailed and concrete features. For, every individual school has a distinctive entity of its own; it is like a work of art which cannot be predicted beforehand. Many intangible influences emanating from its students and its teachers and born of their scintillating contact enter into its composition. But there are certain broad, common features; there is a certain community of aims, ideals and purposes; there are preferences of method and similarities of approach. I have considered it sufficient to elucidate these; to do more would have been adventurous beyond discretion and, even from a practical point of view, undesirable.

The Second Part deals with certain aspects of Higher Education: with Vocational Education, University

Education and the Training of Teachers. Most of these contributions have either appeared in educational journals or been presented as papers at certain sessions of the All-India Educational Conferences. The purpose for which they were originally written may also perhaps explain certain avoidable defects. There is, for example, a certain informality of style which may not commend itself to the 'learned' reader. In preparing the book for publication, I have purposely refrained from modifying it considerably because, while, these essays are addressed primarily to the teachers, I prefer to make them acceptable to the general, non-technical reader also. For the same reason I have carefully avoided the use of unnecessary technical language which often sacrifices lucidity of expression to the demands of pedantry. I believe also that educational problems should be studied not only by the professional teacher and the professional student but by all intelligent and educated citizens. It is only by quickening the public interest and awakening the public conscience about education that we can hope to bring about any far-reaching educational reconstruction. The purist in language may also object to certain touches of 'rhetoric' here and there, but the indulgent reader may possibly excuse it on the plea that it helps to throw the point at issue into more emphatic relief.

I am conscious that in the Second Part of the book in particular, I have given expression to certain views which do not happen to be popular and that my conception of University Education and of the place of Vocational Education is not in line with the prevailing ideas on the subject. But I believe it is necessary in intellectual matters to be uncompromisingly sincere with

oneself, even if it provokes differences, for out of such differences of views, discussed honestly and dispassionately, may emerge a fuller truth, a higher synthesis.

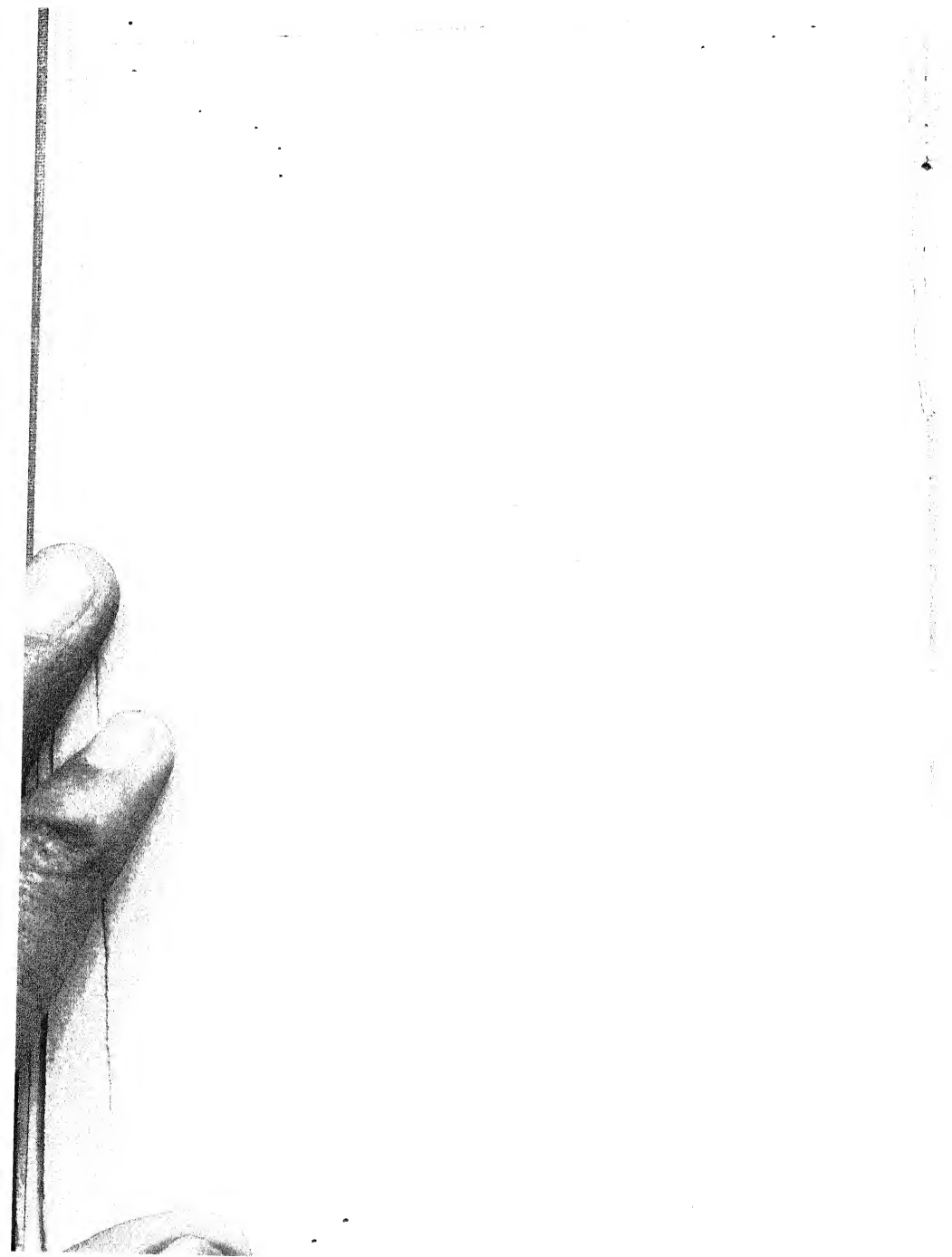
It is not possible here to indicate individually the names of all the educational thinkers who have moulded my ideas—some by providing positive illumination, others by provoking my mental opposition. My indebtedness to some of them will be apparent from the references given in the foot-notes. But I should like to express my particular and unstinted gratitude to Professor John Dewey whose educational writings have influenced me profoundly as they have no doubt influenced countless others in many lands. This is but one instance of how the living stimulus of a great creative thinker may leap across all boundaries of space and time and strike responsive chords in distant minds.

I am thankful to the Editors of the University Journal (Aligarh Muslim University) and of the Punjab Educational Journal for permission to print here my articles on the Release of the Creative Impulse and The Place of the University in National Life (which appeared in the former) and on The School as the Centre of Community Life (which appeared in the latter). My thanks are due also to the Oxford University Press for permission to reprint my article on The Problem of Teaching Practice which appeared in their quarterly journal, Teaching.

ALIGARH,

K. G. SAIYIDAIN.

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CHAPTER I

THE PRESENT BACKGROUND

I PROPOSE to devote the first part of this book to discussing the principles and sketching the portrait of the 'school of the future'—the school, not as it is, but as it can be if devotion and intelligence and understanding are brought to its service. The ordinary Indian school, as we know it today, has obviously failed to exploit most of what is worthy and valuable in the nature of youth; it has failed to tap the sources of their creative energies and to release them into fruitful channels. These schools are at best places where formal training is provided in certain technical skills like reading, writing and drawing or certain prescribed subjects of study like history, geography and science. At the worst they are instruments for killing the spirit of joy, initiative and love of work in children. I believe it is Mr. H. G. Wells who has said somewhere—and he is by no means a pessimistic person: "If you want to feel the generations rushing to waste like rapids—like rapids—you should put your heart and mind into

a private school." Though not quite applicable to the present-day schools of England, many of which show a remarkable vitality and an awakening to modern needs and ideas, it is certainly true of the large majority of our own schools, whether public or private. In making this remark, with a full appreciation of its strong implications, I do not mean to discredit those teachers who, according to their own lights, have been giving of their best to the service of education. But their number is small and, unfortunately, goodwill by itself cannot create an educational revolution. To be effective, it must be inspired by an intelligent understanding of ways and means and a true appreciation of aims and principles. This is what even the best of our teachers very often lack—to say nothing of the large majority who have neither the training nor the inclination to put their hearts into their work. Prospective teachers, actual teachers and others who are interested in education as an instrument for improving the quality of social and individual life must, therefore, seriously address themselves to the task of laying the foundations of a better, a more vitalized, a more life-giving school, the School of the Future, which will take the

place of the existing mockery of what a school should be.

Before drawing in outline the shape of this school as I visualize it, it is necessary to get a grip on the salient and concrete defects of the present educational system. If we can grasp the fundamental psychological mistakes on which it is based, half the battle will be won and the way will be clear for making the necessary reforms. There has been much waste of energy in the past because of our failure to diagnose the situation correctly. Well meaning people have advocated this or that reform in the machinery of administration or in the curriculum and the official guardians of education have been complacently preoccupied with what may be described as the 'mechanics' of education—the compilation of statistics, the preparation of records, the allocation of scanty funds to growing needs. A little 'science,' or what passes as such, has been tacked on to the already over-crowded curriculum; in a few classes, and grudgingly, the medium of instruction has been changed; second languages have been introduced now a couple of years earlier, now later. Such piece-meal, unco-ordinated efforts do not touch the root of the matter at all; they are

rather like fighting with shadows which may possibly give one a feeling of satisfaction with oneself but does not kill the real mischief. What is urgently required, is a correct appraisal of our educational situation with reference to the national needs and ideals and a courageous attempt to bring about a radical transformation of the method and organization as well as the ideas and principles underlying our educational policy. Such an appraisal requires volumes to itself if it is to be exhaustive and to cover all the relevant features; it is, therefore, beyond the scope of our present purpose. I shall content myself with demonstrating the failure of the educational system by choosing as it were a few outstanding features of an expansive landscape and attempting to show their bearings on the situation as a whole.

Education is an activity which is concerned both with the individual and with society or rather with the individual-in-society. Every system of education must, therefore, be judged by this criterion—does it foster the development of individuality and, in that process, manage to adjust the individual adequately to his growing environment? To put the same thing in more concrete terms, do our schools succeed in bringing out all

that is best and unique in the children? Do they provide facilities and opportunities for their special gifts and strong natural inclinations to develop and come to the surface, so that they might at a later date be pressed into the service of social ends? Do they adjust the Indian student to his environment—the social, economic and cultural milieu in which he has to live and from which he must derive the special colour and texture of his life-activities? Let us take the two aspects of this all-important criterion of judgment, one by one.

Any one who is even superficially conversant with the working of our schools and the psychological equipment of their scholars, can clearly see that our present schools are so organized that they definitely *militate* against the development of individuality. I use that strong word advisedly, for it is not that they merely fail to bring out the uniqueness and possibilities in each individual child—that would be largely true of schools in other countries as well. By the whole organization of their methods of teaching and learning and discipline, they actively suppress individuality and let children's distinctive gifts die of inanition and disuse. They are responsible for the heartless,

if unconscious, waste of the finest human material and potentialities which are implicit in their pupils. I have had many opportunities of mixing fairly intimately with and forming an estimate of the capacities of many English students and have also met many students belonging to the French, German and Swiss nationalities and I can say, without any national egotism, that the average Indian student is in no respect inferior to the average student of any other nationality so far as his natural gifts and capacities, both intellectual and moral, are concerned. In some respects, he may even be superior to the latter because of his ancient racial and cultural heritage. In the above remark a reservation has been made, *i.e.*, "so far as his natural gifts and capacities are concerned." This proviso must be carefully understood for, in actual fact, we find that after a period of schooling—say at the age of about eighteen—the Indian student has less energy, less resourcefulness, less initiative and a weaker consciousness of self and of community ties than his fellows in other countries. But I am convinced that, under favourable circumstances and the benefits of a proper system of education, we could turn out of our schools young

men and women of great capacity and marked individuality who could hold their own practically and culturally, against the youth of any other country. Even today there are in India men of outstanding individuality who have made their mark in almost every walk of life, who have few equals and hardly any superiors in the whole world. Some of them are people who have never come within the grind-mill of the educational system; others have been able to withstand the repressive influence of schools and colleges and to retain their originality and their strength of character. What might we not achieve if life is not cramped and restricted from all sides, if schools are so organized as to release rather than imprison the creative impulses of life! For, in the words of the poet, Iqbal:

بندگی میں گھٹ کے رہ جاتی ہے ایک جوڑے کم آب

اور آزادی میں بھر بیگراں ہے زندگی

[Fettered and cramped, life is like a little, sluggish rivulet; when free it becomes the boundless ocean!]

How do we manage to restrict and cramp the life of children in schools? Let me indicate a few outstanding causes. In the first

place, it is the uniformity, the rigidity, the narrowness of our schools that deny individuality all chances to express itself in congenial forms. There is no recognition, no appreciation of psychological types. Children are herded into uninteresting, formal and uninviting schools at a time when all the forces of their being demand that they should be playing actively and joyously in the open air. I am referring here, of course, to children who are 'fortunate' enough to be sent to schools—the large majority are deprived of that privilege altogether! These children at school have to undergo there the trying ordeal of hours of drudgery, of uninteresting book learning. There is no provision at all for those creative and constructive activities, both manual and mental, which give room for the expression of every child's unique talents. Without joyful activity, without interest or curiosity or the pleasant sense of being preoccupied with a self-chosen task, the school becomes a veritable prison for the children and to use Wordsworth's line in a new context, "the shades of the prison house begin to close upon the growing boy," as the years roll on. And a prison is hardly likely to evoke the best potentialities and qualities of its inmates! To

this childhood without joy, succeeds adolescence without marked and differentiated interests. In the secondary schools, too, boys (and girls) are expected to follow passively and mechanically the same monotonous round of theoretical studies which allow little room for personal choice or preference. The commonest concessions are whether one will study Arabic or Persian or Sanskrit and take up Science or Drawing. Adolescence sets in with all its undeniable craving for reality, for definite, concrete work and its growing interest in art and poetry and literature and everything else that inspires generous thoughts and emotions. But the school goes on serenely with its deadly monotony of traditional work. It pays no heed to the future vocations of the children and drifts aimlessly from one year to the next. The educative resources implicit in arts, crafts, industry, agriculture, and other major activities of the human race are not exploited at all and the youths are trained as if practically all of them were destined to become office clerks. Little wonder then that, under the stress of economic forces, this actually becomes the ambition of the large majority and their varied gifts, which might have been developed and utilized in other

lines of activity to the enrichment of national life, become atrophied for want of use and they either 'succeed' in securing service in offices or drift into any uncongenial employment open to them. Not that there is anything intrinsically objectionable or disgraceful in office work or clerical occupations; but when a whole nation is being educated to that narrow end, which it consciously or unconsciously accepts, it is idle to hope for any marked individuality amongst the students. Indian education has made the mistake of hitching its wagon not to the star but to the street-lamp and the consequences of this lowering of the ideal are visible in every aspect of our national life.

Do we fare any better if our education is viewed from the supplementary point of view mentioned above, *i.e.*, as a means of adjusting the Indian student to the social, economic and cultural environment in which he will have to pass his life? Here the failure of the present school system is implicit in its historical origin. How can the school harmonize the child with his surroundings and give him an insight into his social and cultural heritage when, in its aims and ideals, as well as its methods, curriculum and organiza-

tion it is inspired by principles and ideas not native to the Indian soil but mainly transplanted without due thought and adaptation from a foreign medium? How can it unlock for him either the external world or the inner world of his own intellectual and emotional interests when even the medium of his instruction is not his own mother tongue? Beset with these formidable handicaps and lacking a genuine appreciation of the intimate relationship between life and education, the school has lost contact with that complex and varied life around it which gives meaning and direction to its teaching activities and has withdrawn into the seclusion of an artificial world of its own. The child who passes the school portal and enters into this artificial world, say at the age of five or six, and remains there till he is seventeen or eighteen, is apt to lose all contact with life during this period. When he emerges from this world, devoid of all living and vital experiences, he is, quite naturally, unable to fit into the existing scheme of things and cannot plant his feet firmly and confidently on the ground. Like a prisoner kept too long in the darkness of his cell, he feels out of his element in the bustle and noise and the broad-day light of the great world outside. The

transition is too abrupt for him; he fails to discover continuity of motives, purposes and relationships between the two worlds. Even when after several years, he settles down to his own work in life, he does not feel quite at ease with himself and at peace with his surroundings. There is a lurking sense of something being incomplete and wanting, because the break between the 'school world' and the 'real world' disturbs his mental equilibrium and his intellectual habits. He even finds it necessary to unlearn many of these habits and attitudes which he had acquired at school because they do not 'work' in his new environment. Thus the school actually becomes a hinderance and a handicap in the process of adjustment, instead of being a help in it.

I have not over-drawn the picture or exaggerated its outstanding features for the sake of effect; it is confirmed by our everyday observations and experience. Let us choose by way of illustration, the case of a promising village youth whose parents are engaged in some useful occupation like farming or weaving. They have their definite function in the life of their community; their work is humble but honourable and it gives them a certain assured status in

their society. If, through economy and self-denial, they manage to send their boy to the village school and subsequently to the neighbouring town school, they have certainly the right to expect that the school will throw open to him better chances in life than they have themselves had. What is it that actually happens? After years of patient self-sacrifice and fond hopes, the boy returns to the village, lucky if he has not fallen by the roadside and has managed to pass the Matriculation Examination. On his return this 'educated' young man discovers—what he had already suspected—that he is not at all fitted, either by training or inclination, for the economy of village life. His little knowledge—fragments of disconnected, ill-organized information about miscellaneous things—gives him a false sense of his own importance. His school training, which lacked the educative element of hard, honest manual work, gives him a perverted sense of values. He begins to look upon the work of his father and other villagers with distaste, if not actual contempt. His thoughts and dreams no longer hover round the plough and the spinning wheel, two of the most valuable instruments of human civilization; they begin to

turn more and more towards the office-stool and the ledger! I am not concerned here with arguing the superiority of the one over the other. The obstinate, indisputable fact is that the clerical departments cannot possibly absorb and accommodate all those who aspire to them. The result is that this young man, the hope of his poor family, wastes another few years in his fruitless search for a 'job' and during this period he is exposed to all those humiliations and undesirable influences which are incidental to this business and which effectively undermine a person's self-confidence and self-respect. Ultimately he either 'settles down' as an ill-paid, subordinate employee in some office, engaged in some kind of monotonous, soulless routine, or is compelled to fall back upon the work of his father—but with a very bad grace. Having passed through all these bitter, unpleasant experiences which pervert one's normal sense of values, he can rarely bring to his work that whole-hearted devotion and attachment which impart even to the humblest of occupations the dignity of creative activity and bring in their train a sense of personal enrichment and expansion. He remains a 'misfit' all through his life and it is this tragedy of the misfit,

this thrusting of square pegs in round holes which is responsible for so much unrest and misery in our present world—the haunting sense of frustration, of something being missing, incomplete or misplaced

Thus we can see how and where the school has failed signally in its function. It has succeeded neither in developing the individuality of its children nor in making them feel at home and fruitfully adjusted to their special environment. More specifically, it has tended to emphasize wrong objectives and values like book learning and competitive success and ignored some of the greatest and most permanent human values and purposes. By devoting itself exclusively to imparting book-knowledge and failing to take note of the dignity of labour in its numerous forms, it has led to the overcrowding of people in a few limited lines to the comparative neglect of others. Thus whether we view it from the point of view of the individual or of society as a whole, we are driven to the uncomfortable conclusion that the school, as a social and educative institution, is not 'delivering the goods.'

There is still another direction in which the wrong orientation of our school system has done

incalculable damage, *i.e.*, in the task of cultural interpretation. It is the business of the school—as thinkers have more or less explicitly recognized in all times—to work as an agency for the transmission and interpretation of national culture to the generation growing up within its four walls. But our present system of education is not broad based on the solid foundations of national culture and civilization and does not derive its inspiration from the achievements of its past or the preoccupations of its present. The result of this unfortunate rift between the school and the sources of national culture has been the growing estrangement of the younger generation from their own heritage of literature, philosophy, morality and religion. They turn instead to foreign sources of inspiration which, though good in themselves and valuable in their own place, can never have the same meaning and significance for them. It is a strange irony that, in our schools and colleges, young men and women study Shakespeare and Milton and are ignorant of their own literary giants, that for the study of Philosophy they turn to Plato and Aristotle and Kant and Berkeley, forgetting that India has been for ages the home of a philosophy which, even today, attracts

western scholars, and that the various races living here have their own precious philosophical heritage. It is not out of a narrow-minded 'nationalism' that I take this point of view—for knowledge is blind to national boundaries and is the property of the whole human race.* The reason why we must give greater importance to indigenous culture in our national education is deeply embedded in human psychology. The culture and thought of a country can yield their full import and significance only to those who have been nourished in its soil and whose minds and emotions have consciously *as well as unconsciously* assimilated its characteristic spirit and life-forms. Where the industrious Indian student will laboriously pick its way through the labyrinths of English literature or philosophy, the English student will normally wend his way through them easily and congenially. But the same Indian student will show great intellectual keenness and self-confidence if his mind is nurtured in his own literary traditions and is exercised

* The Prophet of Islam: "All knowledge is the lost property of the believer; wherever he finds it, he is entitled to it."

on knowledge that is racially and historically congenial to him. Modern psychology of learning and mental development has greatly reinforced this faith in the intimacy of relationship between the activities—intellectual and practical—of the individual and those of the group or the community. I cannot do better than quote with full approval what Dr. Hilda Taba, a keen educational psychologist, says on the subject:

“At no time in recent history have we had more strongly impressed on us the futility of individual activity that is out of step with, and not supported by, our collective culture. Never has the dependence of the patterns and purposes of individual conduct on collective ones been more forcefully proved by scientific research and practical experience.”*

We shall discuss later the implications of this psychological doctrine for educational organization; here we have to note the fact that the school is culturally ineffective because its activities and progress are ‘out of pace’ with our collective culture and it is content to deaden the

* Taba: *Progressive Education*—What Now? (article in *Progressive Education*, March 1934).

youthful mind by thrusting foreign material on it before it has drawn nourishment and inspiration from its own cultural sources.

What, one might ask, can the poor teachers do under these circumstances? Their conditions of work are far from being congenial to fruitful effort in the direction of reform. It is not, as I have already admitted, that the whole personnel of the profession is indifferent to the demands of their calling and fails to appreciate its significance. But usually they have neither the innate capacity nor the training to translate into practice their good intentions and their rather vague aspirations. They often lack the necessary knowledge and, even more so, the chances to crystallize their knowledge into dynamic power. In rare cases where initiative is allied to an intelligent understanding, they are so overwhelmed by the weight of the hidebound system that they beat their wings in vain against the iron bars of their cage. The newly-trained teacher may enter upon his work with high ideals and a generous enthusiasm but the general indifference, ignorance and red-tapism soon hold him in their cold, unrelaxing grip. The private schools are unfortunately no better in this respect—and are often worse—than the

state schools. They are often conducted by ignorant, self-complacent and unimaginative 'philanthropists' who insist on imposing their own stupid ideas on the teachers and who deny to the latter that freedom and respect without which spontaneous endeavour is impossible. So all types of schools have come to look with disfavour and suspicion on all innovations, on all efforts to liberate the children from the thralldom of that mechanical teaching and discipline which kills all joyful, creative activity. They would rather have the teacher mark registers, collect fees and conduct futile examinations every week than see him take the children out on an excursion and play with them joyfully in the fields and in the open air and sunshine. Thus working with inner as well as outer inhibitions, he soon finds himself disillusioned and discouraged and after a short struggle settles down into a reputable pedagogue of the traditional type! What can the teachers do under these circumstances, to repeat the question raised above? I propose to discuss in the ensuing chapter, in the light of the above survey, on what lines school reorganization is possible in India.

CHAPTER II

THE SCHOOL AS AN ACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

IN trying to present a picture of the School of the Future, one is embarrassed by the very plenitude of the material at hand. During the last fifty years, many 'new schools' have come into being in other countries and many educational experiments have been tried and it is the business of the writer who seeks to predict the future to work out the import and implications of these progressive schools for educational organization. Everyone of the more significant of these experiments has something valuable to suggest; it is a finger pointing towards some important feature of the better school that is in the making. It would be a fascinating inquiry to discover and discuss the distinctive features of the many schools that have been established in different countries under the stimulus of newer educational ideas. But that will take us far out of our appointed way. We shall rather concentrate our attention on significant

features and ideas that they have in common because it is out of these that we shall find emerging the composite picture of our school of the future.

What then are the outstanding differences between the 'new' school and the traditional school as we know it today? To express the situation in one phrase, it differs from the traditional school both in its attitude towards the child and its attitude towards the world of everyday affairs and problems. It attaches much greater value to the freedom of the child and, taking its stand on indisputable psychological grounds, it is inspired by the faith that child development can be secured only if his native powers and capacities are given free play to interact fruitfully with his environment. It does not visualize its work as consisting in a constant repression of the child's energies and activities in all directions except scholastic learning. Its point of view rather is: provide for the child an environment that is as rich and active and joyous as possible with opportunities for play, social co-operation, manual work, creative and constructive activities, study of spontaneously chosen books and subjects, and when the environment has been set, let the child

participate fully in its natural and normal activities, congenial to his age and interests. It is by living *here and now* a life that is worth-while and immediately satisfying and meaningful that the child can be best prepared for his duties and functions as an adult. This attitude demands a genuine faith on the part of the teacher in the impulses of the child as the chief instrument and raw material of education. Education is not synonymous with the pouring in of ready-made knowledge; it is rather the disciplining, the organization and co-ordination of his powers and capacities towards valuable and significant ends. The essence of modern teaching on the intellectual side is to give the child a mastery over the *tools* of learning and a lively curiosity and hunger for the acquisition of knowledge. For, scientific knowledge has grown so remarkably and rapidly during the last two centuries that no education, however thorough and prolonged, can expect to make the pupil a master of all or even a considerable part of available learning. Instead, therefore, of giving him a superficial acquaintance with many scattered and disconnected topics, it is more useful to deal thoroughly and leisurely with a small number of

typical experiences, teaching the instruments of learning incidentally and whetting his intellectual appetite. Thus the modern, 'progressive' school seeks to replace information by *experience* and chooses the most significant and abiding aspects of experience for its subject matter and thereby makes school life active and meaningful. We shall discuss the implications of this conception of school work presently.

The new schools also differ in their attitude to the outside world. The traditional conception of school has been artificial and monastic; they were places effectively cut off from the wear and tear and the work and worry of every-day life. They carried on their teaching activities in an academic seclusion, out of touch with the social and economic life surging around them. The modern sociological view of education postulates that the school should constantly draw upon social life and activities for its subject matter, its methods of teaching and its motives of work. There must be a constant and continuous intercourse, a free give-and-take, between the little world of the school and the bigger world outside. Children should be given chances of actual participation in municipal functions, in health services

and other public activities possessing educative significance and thus learn through practice the lessons of service and co-operation. Otherwise the divorce between school and life will make teaching artificial, lacking all significant content and reality, and children will not be able to carry over into the conduct of their daily life the fruits of their school learning and culture.

These two guiding principles of the new school movement furnish us with a conception of the school which differs from the existing conception in several important respects. It requires a re-interpretation, if not a thorough overhauling, of school objectives, a replanning of its curriculum and methods and a reorganization of its internal life and discipline as well as its relationship with community life. Let us examine these demands in some detail.

The schools are preoccupied at present with one narrow but clear-cut problem—how to prepare their pupils to pass certain examinations which have been prescribed by the inscrutable wisdom of educational authorities. Generally speaking, all that furthers this end is welcomed and encouraged, all that does not directly bear on it is either actively discouraged or looked upon as

irrelevant. Sometimes, thanks to the natural cravings of child nature, social life and activities spring up in the small world of the school; latterly, games and sports have become fashionable. But they are often looked upon as outside the regular work of the school and teachers of the orthodox type do not welcome or utilize them for general educational ends. Their narrow vision does not go beyond the formal, scholastic requirements. As against their view, the new school seeks, primarily and above all, to give *life* to its pupils and "to give it abundantly." Learning will surely have its place in it but mainly as an instrument for the enrichment of children's life and interests, *i.e.*, it will be subordinated to the ends of full, happy and vigorous living. This is an abrupt break with the view which has interpreted education as a preparation for the child's future life as an adult, to the stern demands of which his present needs and interests must be sacrificed. It postulates, on the other hand, that the children should here and now actively participate in school life that is intrinsically valuable and pleasure-giving to them, exercising all their healthy, natural powers of action, cooperation and self-expression in various ways. Learn-

ing of subjects and mastery of the technical tools of knowledge must be relegated to their subordinate position—as aids in the activities of an expanding life, as necessary to broaden the pupils' sphere of vision and interests and control. They must be acquired not as ends in themselves but as bye-products in the pursuit of shared activities which appeal to them on their own account. This shifting of the emphasis from the future to the present, from the adult needs and motives to child needs and motives involves a veritable educational revolution. Instead of laying out beforehand plans of what the child is to be and to do and what learning and skills are to be taught to him—that is, casting him in a preconceived mould—the school must recognize that every child is a unique and vigorous little individual who has to be consulted, as it were, about his own future and allowed to shape his own course of development under tactful and understanding guidance. Otherwise, he is apt to kick against all external restrictions and resist efforts made in behalf of his growth. Hence the need for the teachers of the new school to study carefully his stages of growth, the developing phases of his interest, and the activities and characteristics associated with each.

Without a knowledge of and sensitiveness to these, he is in danger of building his school education on foundations of shifting sand.

By way of confirming the view of the school presented above, I shall quote the opinions of two educational authorities, one English and the other American, both of whom have greatly influenced modern educational ideas and practices. Dr. Nunn, Professor of Education in the London University, remarks:

“The school must be thought of primarily not as a place of learning where certain knowledge is learnt but as a place where the young are disciplined in certain forms of activity—namely, those that are of the greatest and most permanent significance in the wider world.”*

Professor Dewey, America's leading educational philosopher and prophet, has presented a complete and unified picture of the school, as he conceives it, in constant and dynamic contact with social life.† To him the school is a ‘special environment’ where a certain quality of life and certain types of activities and occupations are

* *Education—Its Data and First Principles.*

† *Democracy and Education.*

provided with the object of securing children's development along desirable lines. He mentions three main characteristics of this school environment to which a reference may briefly be made here. The first characteristic is that it provides a simplified environment where such factors are selected out of the complex and intricate modern life as have an abiding and fundamental significance and are lucid and interesting enough to evoke response from the children. Having selected out of all the activities and institutions that sustain civilized life—business, politics, art, science, literature, religion, etc.,—what is *simple and fundamental*, the school presents it to the young in an orderly manner and thus gradually gives them an insight into the meaning of their apparently chaotic world.

The second function of the school environment is to eliminate what is unworthy or ugly in social life outside and mirror only that which is valuable and educative, so that it becomes a replica of the better and cleaner society that is yet to be. By eschewing whatever is trivial or perverse or mere dead weight from the past and by providing for the children a purified and *selective* medium of action, the school can become

a nucleus of progress and better living. Thus while it certainly reflects within it the world outside, it does not do so haphazardly and indiscriminately; it seeks to avoid the introduction of those lower and meaner motives of action and perverted social relationships which corrupt and deform modern civilization.

Thirdly, the school must perform the function of balancing the various factors and elements of the social environment, of establishing rich and varied contacts between individuals and groups and coordinate the interests and loyalties of the young which are subject to pulls from many, and often conflicting, directions. But for an institution charged with the duty of harmonizing and ordering into a hierarchy the various demands which modern life makes on the young, they are in danger of lacking the unity and stability of character.

The above discussion enables us to see, if still rather vaguely and in bald outline, the picture of our school. It is a centre of vigorous life, not of anaemic learning; it provides different types of activities for its children and values their fullness of life and joy above their scholastic achievements; it is in direct, intimate contact with the

realities of the life around, reflecting the best and worthiest of its features and, by the proper organization and evaluation of its activities, gives unity of outlook and harmony of loyalties to the personality of the growing child.

Consistently with this conception of the school, we have to reorganize our every day methods of teaching in the light of child psychology. A study of the child's native interests and tendencies reveals that he is naturally and innately inclined to doing things, taking up various kinds of occupations and putting his own vague ideas and plans into action. Through construction and its correlative activity of destruction, which vexes the adults so much, he seeks to express himself. The two general tendencies of "physical activity" and "mental activity" (as Thorndike calls them) work in very close co-operation during the years of childhood and youth. In the early years the former is even more important and fundamental than the latter; for, the activity of thinking, planning out things, trying alternative ideas and schemes is subordinate to, and carried out through, the medium of physical activity. Knowledge is definitely subordinated to the needs of action, a situation which

is reminiscent of how knowledge and science have developed in the course of racial experience. The age of abstract thought and reasoning is not yet come, for the child does not require them as instruments of his immediate life-needs and problems. Thus, to begin with, 'four' has no meaning for the child as an abstract numeral; it means four bricks or four chairs or four children. The same concreteness of meaning, the same association of ideas with their applications to actual problems and situation may be traced in all the mental contents of the child. Qualities like "A Sense of Duty" or "Gentleness" are real to him only to the extent that they come within his experience in the performance of certain specific duties or in being gentle to one's parents or play-fellows or pets. The same thing applies to his school studies. The study of a book or the mastery of an arithmetical problem is taken up into the child's life and adds to his power only if it bears on his present activities and the interests and situations which engage his attention at home or on the playground. Thus if the reading of a book will, for example, satisfy his craving for adventure stories or help him in the construction of a toy aeroplane or give him suggestions for his

collection of butterflies, he would take it up willingly and devote himself spontaneously to mastering the difficulties incidental to the task—thus learning will serve the purpose of his everyday life. Similarly, if his arithmetic lessons deal with problems of calculations which arise in the course of his daily living—help him to measure his garden or calculate the cost of white-washing or keep an account of domestic expenses—arithmetic will take on for him an interest and a fascination that will surprise the bored teachers of the subject. “Composition” that gives him a chance to describe his own activities and experiences and encourages keen observation as well as the play of imagination becomes a joyous source of self-expression, a delight communicated to and shared with one’s fellows. It is no longer a lifeless and formal training in writing sentences and mastering the baffling and obstinate intricacies of grammar. It is possible likewise—but hardly necessary—to illustrate the point further with reference to the other school studies.

One might be confronted here with an objection from the orthodox pedant: Are you not lowering the dignity of learning by associating it

too directly with, by subordinating it in fact to, the needs of activity? Will it not sacrifice the great and noble ideal of knowledge to the whims and fancies and transient interests of childhood? Behind that view lies a long history of economic, political and philosophical conflicts in which it is not possible to enter here; it is based on one of those many dualisms of thought which have always exercised the mind of educational philosophers. Modern psychology does not concede the validity of the argument. The child is a staunch, unabashed, enthusiastic pragmatist. You may place before him knowledge, learning and truths of the highest value but he is always rather 'impertinently' wondering: what is the good of all this to me? How does it help me to work out my plans and occupations better? He will never put his heart into any piece of school work unless he can see its purpose from his own point of view, *i.e.*, whether and in what way it touches upon and enriches his own life. Failing this realization, he remains indifferent, at best half-hearted, towards his studies. The slogans of 'knowledge for the sake of knowledge' or 'art for the sake of art' do not appeal to him. So, whether or not we welcome this natural tendency

of the child towards practical activity and his naïve utilitarianism, we are compelled to make use of it as an aid to effective teaching. Even from an absolute or theoretical point of view there can be no reasonable objection against placing life and its noble purposes before the demands of Art or Science. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is the motto of the narrow-minded, self-centred pedant who has lost sight of the great universe by gazing constantly, as it were, at a small crystal. 'Art for the sake of art' is likewise the decadent artist's creed. But teachers have been trapped into the view—partly by forces inherent in the nature of their work and partly by the prestige of scholars and universities—and have tried to impose it on the growing and expanding life of children. They have transformed centres of child education into 'book schools' where all that passes as knowledge is at a high premium while self-activity and self-expression, originality and creativeness are heavily discounted. The child's values are thus given a wrong orientation at the very outset. He gets into the habit of looking down upon all useful and constructive work and learns to attach an exaggerated significance to his own half-hearted

playing with the symbols of knowledge. The irony of this pedagogical situation is that it does not succeed even in its immediate objective; the school fails to turn out students with scholarly interests and equipment. It is an unpleasant but effective illustration of "much ado about nothing" for, knowledge that is divorced from life remains barren and superficial and neither enlists interest nor enters into children's life and activities.

What then will be the main characteristics of our school as we have visualized it? In the first place, teaching especially in the lower classes will centre round 'occupations,' congenial to children and possessing genuine social import. In the pursuit of these occupations, children and youth will be confronted with real life situations and problems demanding their thought and attention. They will need knowledge of different kinds and the help of many people—their parents, teachers and friends—to solve them. The mere fact that the children will *personally* feel the need for learning some arithmetic or geography or physics will transform their attitude towards such work. They will joyfully put forth their best effort and learn the lesson of self-activity.

The child will thus start in the right spirit on his adventurous career of picking up bits of knowledge as he needs them for his purposes, but he will, at first, be indifferent to their formal nomenclature, *i.e.*, it will be immaterial to him whether a certain body of facts and ideas belongs to history or geography or science. It is only later with increased knowledge and experience that the division of knowledge into various specific subjects, each labelled with a name, will be necessary. The alert, wide-awake teacher will seek tactfully and unobtrusively to co-ordinate and direct into certain healthy and fruitful channels all the miscellaneous information and attitudes acquired by the child during his everyday life, his occasional excursions into the country, his visits to places of historical or geographical interest, his activities in connection with gardening, handwork and games. On this foundation he will build all the later study of geography, history, physics, botany, chemistry, etc., taking care, however, that they are not treated in isolation from the life-activities from which they have taken their origin. They must be taught in close association with practical work suitable to them. Thus geography teaching, for example, will involve frequent excursions

and outdoor observation of geographical phenomena. It will also require a geographical museum in which there will be available specimens of plants, crops, manufactured articles, stones and what could be obtained of the flora and fauna of the various natural regions of the world. Botany, likewise, will be taught in close connection with actual gardening and observation of, and communion with, living natural phenomena. Specialist teachers will work out the detailed technique, but if the object of education is to impart both knowledge and reverence:

Let more of knowledge in us grow

And more of reverence in us dwell;

if that is so, then our method of teaching must link learning to life and give us an appreciative interest in all forms of life.

It is possible to suggest similar lines of reorganization for other school subjects to be taught in our "Active School," a term that is applied by some European and American writers to the new schools working on these principles. Physics and Chemistry and Mathematics having a practical application will be learnt mainly in workshops and fully equipped laboratories—not the

present mimic, doll-house laboratories where children juggle with a few test-tubes and learn how to change the colour of liquids! They will try to reproduce, so far as circumstances permit, actual working conditions of the real workshops and laboratories and thus provide for the adolescent student that contact with reality which he intensely craves for at this age. Such a scheme is obviously costly—there is no gainsaying that objection; but unless we are prepared to spend money on education, we cannot have anything but *cheap* education. In the conditions of modern life and in view of the type of education demanded, we cannot be satisfied with the simple educational equipment of an earlier age when teaching did not require any elaborate or expensive paraphernalia and, being mainly scholastic and theoretical, it was provided by philanthropic scholars to the seekers after knowledge with the help of a few books or manuscripts. Modern teaching, to be genuinely effective, requires expenditure of money on the equipment of schools with all that stimulates children's activity and self-expression. Other countries have tackled the financial problem and made considerable headway in this direction; we cannot afford to remain

entrenched behind the persistent excuse of financial difficulties.

Many inspiring accounts of such educational ventures have been published in recent years, more particularly after the War. Reference may be made here to two such accounts—one of a Public School in England at Oundle and the other of a New School at Bierges in Belgium. The Oundle school had the good fortune to secure the services of a Headmaster of unusual vision and driving force—Mr. Sanderson who died only a few years ago. He was responsible for infusing an entirely new spirit in that school, which had been nourished till then in medieval traditions. He reorganized science teaching completely, not only making it more realistic and practical but linking it up intimately with the objectives of a cultural education. He established well-equipped laboratories and workshops in the school, encouraged creative, constructive and individual work, stimulated boys by his personal enthusiasm and vigorous teaching to undertake cooperative projects and strengthened the ‘modern side’ of the school beyond recognition. He abolished the hard and fast divisions of subjects and related every lesson

to the interests of children and the large purposes of human life. A fascinating account of these bold experiments is given in a book called 'Sanderson of Oundle' compiled, in collaboration, by his school colleagues. An interesting and readable account of his ideas will also be found in 'The Story of a Great School Master' by H. G. Wells.

The account of the planning, organization and underlying ideas of the Belgian school is given by its founder, Vasconcellos, in a book which has been translated into English under the title 'A New School in Belgium.' It describes how the principles of the new education were applied to concrete problems of physical, intellectual and moral education and how all school work was based on the twin principles of self-activity and group cooperation. Under the stress of the European War, the school broke down but the methods worked out there are of permanent value and are being tried, with modifications, in all progressive schools and their leaven is working with increased force in many western countries. It is for the teachers in India to study the working of such schools, to see how far their ideas are practicable under our own circumstances and

then proceed to put them into practice, undeterred by the discouraging conditions surrounding them. Such a study will reveal to them certain common features in most of the new schools to some of which reference has been made in this chapter. He will find that in all these schools learning has been made into an active process; pupils' own activity is aroused by providing materials and occupations which engage their spontaneous interests. This demands that various forms of handwork and 'expression work' should find recognition as a vital factor in the educative process. Handwork should be treated not as a separate 'subject' of study but rather as a method of approach towards learning which gives pupils a better understanding of all the subjects of the curriculum. According to a great educational reformer of Germany who died only a couple of years ago, George Kerschensteiner, *productive work*, carried out cooperatively and with interest, should form the basis of all real education and culture rather than the printed book which has so far occupied the forefront of teachers' and pupils' attention. In selecting suitable forms of this productive work for introduction in schools, the guiding principle should be to reproduce through

them typical social situations and occupations so that knowledge may be acquired by children in a context similar to that which they will meet in their later life.

There is one other characteristic of our school of the future without reference to which this outline picture will not be complete. It attaches supreme importance to the child's freedom and postulates a spontaneity of development for him. The child is an autonomous organism, *i.e.*, his growth is initiated from within. The teacher can neither change the pace of this growth nor its innate direction. Even if by persistent effort he succeeds in doing so, he will bring about an arrest or perversion of development. His function, as interpreted by the new education, is rather to 'follow nature' intelligently, providing such activities, occupations and stimuli in the child's environment as will release and feed the child's natural sources of energy. He removes from the child's path unnecessary obstructions, both material as well as psychological; he encourages those tendencies which are healthy and valuable. But the essential process of growth must be directed from within by the child himself. Practical implications of this principle

of individuality or autonomy are manifold and have been referred to by implication already. It postulates a system of free not repressive discipline and favours some suitable form of self government in school. Rigidity of procedure and classification, prescription of uniform standards of achievement in learning and conduct are all seen to be harmful and unwarranted interference with the freedom of child's growth. Disciplining of powers is, of course, essential if the child is to work towards an effective expression of self in school and outside, but this discipline must increasingly be a restraint from within, inspired by a recognition of social obligations and of the imperative needs of fruitful activity in a given situation. It is only in an environment where there is elasticity, variety and room for individual adaptations that the unique individuality of each child, belonging to some distinct psychological type, can be brought to fruition.

CHAPTER III

THE SCHOOL AS A CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT

WHAT is the effect of the present school environment on the development of its students? We have seen that it is obviously unsuited to capture their interests and provide outlets for their energies, because it has been, and still continues to be, too formal and bookish, always exaggerating the importance of symbols and instruments of learning and placing them above the growing needs of child life towards activity and self-expression. Its rigid routine of work does not appeal to them; every instinct in their being cries out against the repression of their physical activity, their creative and social impulses, their desire for doing, for construction, for experimentation with the environment. The problem before the educator is so to reorganize the work of the school that children's attitude towards it will be completely altered and they will devote all their irrepressible vitality and enthusiasm to the service of school ends. The problem is partly one of handling the ordinary

school subjects differently, enriching their content, linking them more closely with the child's life and environment and thus enabling him to see greater significance and 'worth-whileness' in the school pursuits. This aspect has been discussed in the last chapter where I pointed out the need for transforming the school into an active environment, 'a hive of purposeful, creative activity.' The supplementary aspect of this problem is concerned with the endeavour to enrich the life and work of the school by the introduction of certain extra-curricular activities and occupations which may not form an integral part of the traditional school curriculum but can, under certain circumstances, become valuable means of providing social, cultural and intellectual education. They may take their rise normally out of the interests and preoccupations generated in ordinary school work; or they may be set into motion by the contagious enthusiasm of a teacher or an older student for some absorbing hobby. But by being carried out in an atmosphere of greater spontaneity and freedom these interests will be developed further according to the individual's bent of mind and they will make greater demands on his powers of organization, resourcefulness and

initiative which do not find sufficient scope in the normal routine of school work. For, even if ordinary school teaching were much better organized than at present, there will be a considerable amount of formal subject matter in it—grammar, the technique of skill subjects, facts of history and geography—which will make demands on certain mental powers of the child but not bring into play certain other vital and creative capacities. It is to cater to this side of the child's nature that attempts are being made to widen the sphere of school activities so as to enlist all the manifold and growing powers of the child and arrange for his study as well as leisure pursuits so that both of them are mutually enriched through the refining and co-ordinating influence of the school. The school, thus broadened out, will acquire a domain over the whole life of the child and provide for him work and play, theoretical studies and practical work, individual hobbies and corporate activities. It will thus help in the resolution of that antagonism and dissociation of attention which handicaps the child at present who has one attitude and personality at home and on the playground—an active, dynamic and, in his own peculiar way, creative

organism—and quite another in the school—a passively receptive automaton without any interests or enthusiasm. By relaxing the rigid and unnatural boundaries which divide the home from the school, work from leisure and studies from play, by taking the whole of child life within its province, the school environment can become educative in the truest sense.

In America this movement has made considerable headway and has been given a practical shape. Many educational authorities have extended the length of the school day, enlarged the school premises and buildings and modified the school time-table so as to include within it all kinds of pursuits and activities. The idea is to keep the child at school under educational influences as long as possible—say for twelve hours a day and every day of the week—and provide, within it, facilities not only for study and play but also those that are associated with home life, with club life and with industrial workshops. Children work and play and pursue their hobbies and organize social functions and amusements in the school. The scheme which has been applied by one, Superintendent Wirt, to a whole school system is generally

known as the Gary Scheme. It is open to the obvious objection that this system lends itself to too much 'school-mastering' and to keeping the child away from home. But the objection has been met by pointing out that, in the first place, these are not school master's schools where that autocrat sits 'in awful dignity,' to the great annoyance and repression of his pupils; they are essentially freedom-loving schools. Secondly, while home influence of the right kind is an inestimable blessing, most of the children are, under the stress of modern life, deprived of a real, educative home environment. In America, for example, where modern economic and industrial conditions have set into motion a progressive disintegration of family life, there is a special need for a co-ordinating agency that would integrate the child's life and act as a centrifugal force. Such a centre, in this age, must inevitably be the school which has, by force of circumstances, become the 'residue legatee' of many obligations neglected by the homes, the community and the churches. Nor is this to us a matter of theoretical interest only—we cannot afford to neglect the import and far-reaching significance of similar developments in our own country. None of our institutions,

which are by their very nature entrusted with grave responsibilities towards the education of the younger generation, are discharging their functions efficiently. The cultural chaos in India, consequent upon the breaking down of the old order, and the imperfections of the new one, has deprived the children of the educative resources that are normally available in a well-ordered society. The home and the family, for instance, on which our culture has been built up for ages, have ceased to exercise genuine educative influences on the majority of Indian children. The parents are often too poor and ignorant to provide for their children material and psychological conditions conducive to proper growth. One cannot reasonably expect in most Indian homes those amenities of life which have a refining and cultural influence on children in other lands. The parents are pre-occupied, more intensely than in other countries, with the ever-present and ever-unsolved problem of earning a livelihood and they have neither the leisure nor the resources of knowledge and of money to bring up their children properly. In saying this I am not ignoring the moral value and 'hardening' effect of, say, an arduous apprenticeship for village children on the farm and in the

workshop. But one cannot get away from the fact that most children *are* brought up in an unhygienic, unrefined, de-educative environment and that it is the business of the reformed school to make good the defects and handicaps of poor home conditions and make arrangements, within the school, for their social life, hobbies, games, etc., which might, under normal conditions, have been left over largely to the parents. Nor are the other great social institutions—religious, vocational, political—so organized as to share the burden of education with the school and we have, therefore, to see how we can meet adequately this difficult situation and make the best of it so that the school may take hold of the child's entire life.

The solution of this problem lies in the direction of making the schools ever more active and ever more *creative*. The first term has been discussed at some length already; the second, 'creative,' needs elucidation. It is very difficult to convey, with any degree of fullness, the meaning of this rich and significant adjective.*

* For a fuller discussion of the meaning of the creative attitude see Chapter IV.

'Creativity' in education is not a mere 'method'; it is a *spirit* of approach to work, in which we express ourselves joyously, freely and spontaneously. These are the three distinctive marks of all creative activity—a spontaneous entering into the activity because we feel that its completion, and the effort to that end, will add to our own becoming; freedom in the choice of our methods and means and freedom from external bonds and restrictions; and joy, which according to Bergson, is 'the seal set by Nature' on all activity that represents a triumphant assertion and expression of our powers and forces. Where these conditions are satisfied, creative activity results, not necessarily in the sense of bringing forth any artistic product of great merit but in the sense of having a releasing influence on our own personality and potentialities. This significance of the creative attitude may perhaps be aptly illustrated by a very interesting, if unacademic, story. There is a well-known tale by Anatole France, called 'Our Lady's Juggler.' The juggler, who is the central figure in it, is a great master in his own line of work and can perform juggling tricks which no one else in the trade can rival. He has a religious turn of mind and, after some years

of successful career as a popular juggler, he decides to dedicate his life to the service of Virgin Mary and enters a convent. There he finds a crowd of highly-gifted artists, poets, sculptors and musicians who paint and sing and make statues and decorative figures in honour of the Virgin. The juggler becomes dispirited and miserable because he can do nothing of the kind. He rages at himself for his incapacity, for having nothing worthy to offer at the altar of the Lady. One day, however, he has a flash of inspiration. He goes to the room where the Virgin's statue is placed, closes all the doors and, standing on his head, begins to perform in her honour, with all his skill and devotion, all those juggling tricks which had delighted his spectators in the days of old. He forgets himself entirely in his work (or worship?); he has no idea of the respect conventionally due to the place where he is performing these antics. The joy of the true artist seizes him and, inspired by the suppressed yearnings of years of consecrated life, he puts his heart and soul into the performance and excels himself. When the priests saw him do this they were angry and thought it was a great sacrilege. But when they were thinking of removing him from the place,

by force if necessary, they saw, to their great astonishment, the statue of Virgin Mary step down from the pedestal and brush his sweating brow with her mantle!

The rare psychological insight of the author has beautifully expressed in this symbolical story the underlying significance of the juggler's work. It is self-expression, pure and simple, inspired by genuine interest and devotion. It is free and spontaneous and yields joy to the worker and is, therefore, truly creative work—not from the point of view of the onlookers who happened on him—the philistines!—but from the point of view of the juggler himself and the Virgin who could appreciate the motive and the spirit inspiring the work, rendered precious and valuable because it had called into its service the whole-hearted devotion of the worker and focussed within itself *his* best and highest powers. It is in this sense that every individual child and adult can do creative work in his or her own particular sphere, whether humble or exalted. Psychology confirms the view that every normal child has some spark of special talent—if only we could discover it—and the business of the teacher is to do so and to see to it that it is given opportunities of expression.

I concede that the work done by each child under the circumstances, may not be of any great artistic value. But because of the influence which it will have on the child's attitude and personality, it will be far more valuable than any technically perfect productive work, completed under the detailed and minute, but mechanical, supervision of the teacher. For, as Bergson suggests, "the ultimate reason of human life is a creation which, in distinction from that of the artist or men of science, can be pursued at every moment and by all men alike (namely) the creation of self by self, the continual enrichment of personality by elements that it does not draw from outside but causes to spring forth from itself."

Thus it is *creative* work that we want in our schools, so that children may, through it, create their own selves and enrich their understanding and interests. I shall take a few examples to show how certain valuable activities can be utilized to add creativeness to school life. But I shall not deal here with the creative teaching of the usual school subjects, although it is a very fascinating field to explore. For, there *are* certain subjects which lend themselves pre-eminently to creative teaching. Literature, for

example, is one of the highest products of creative imagination and the only sound approach to its study and appreciation is the creative approach through which one learns to appreciate the beauty of form and expression by actually creating literature. Experiments have been successfully carried out in the direction of teaching literature in a creative spirit in close correlation with poetry, music and painting. The teaching of composition, likewise, offers numerous opportunities for the creative method. Similarly, History, Geography and Science can be made to yield creative joy and opportunity for self-expression, if rightly presented to and approached by children. But I shall leave aside this topic and turn to other activities of a semi-curricular and extra-curricular type, like gardening, manual work, craft work, social service, literary clubs, school magazine, which give fine opportunities for making school life active, meaningful and creative for children. To fulfil this object, they must satisfy three conditions:—

1. They should extend and carry further the interests—intellectual, practical or artistic—which have been generated in the course of ordinary school teaching and should establish a

mutually enriching contact between the 'academic' work of the school and the students' leisure hobbies.

2. They should give scope for the creative expression of all that is unique and individual in every pupil and, since they belong to various psychological types, this means considerable variety in the nature of these activities.

3. They should make a call on the students' initiative, resourcefulness and capacity for co-operative and disciplined work under democratic leadership, for these qualities represent the aspect of character that is largely ignored in the routine activities of the classroom.

What activities, then, shall we choose to illustrate our point? It is obvious that ultimately every school must evolve a set of such activities in the light of its own special circumstances, *i.e.*, its material resources, the nature of its environment, the bent of its pupils' interests and the training and hobbies of its teachers. In details there can be no uniformity, although they may be chosen under the guidance of the same broad, general principles. For the sake of illustration, I shall choose a few of the many available activities, *i.e.*, those that are typical and

representative and offer, within themselves, considerable room for variety and individualization.

MANUAL WORK

I place manual work of various kinds at the head of the list because of its very important rôle in the child's early development. Psychologically its value lies in keeping the theoretical and practical elements of the child's experience in proper co-ordination and harmony which the formal theoretical work of the school is in danger of upsetting. Sociologically, its value lies in making shared activity and social control possible. As a method of instruction, it helps in the better understanding and mastery of all school subjects. It is obviously essential in the teaching of sciences, but is no whit less important for the understanding and appreciation of arts subjects like history and literature. There is 'no appreciation without creation' and one of the elements involved in most creative activity is manual work. Further, there is a much greater possibility of cultivating the *unique* and distinctive gifts of each individual pupil through activities like woodwork, gardening, drawing, painting,

etc., than through the gradgrind which often sums up ordinary school teaching. There are certain types of manual work which, in my opinion, are essential for every properly conducted school, since on psychological as well as social grounds, they are helpful in the development of the child.

(a) Woodwork which is important because the possibilities of *developing work* in it are practically unlimited and the child with his growing mastery over technique and his constructive imagination cannot easily exhaust them. It enables him to gain control over his muscular activity and effect nervous co-ordination and it gives him a practical insight into ordinary mechanical processes and the use of ordinary tools without which an individual is always apt to remain somewhat helpless and maladjusted to his environment. Moreover, it is an honourable and useful craft the practice of which gives one a sense of personal worthfulness and utility. From the point of view of traditional school work, it is useful because by correlating it with work in history, geography, science and mathematics, the teaching of these subjects can be made more interesting and realistic.

(b) Gardening is a delightful hobby and an education in itself. I would have, if possible, every student in school doing some gardening and teachers taking it up as a leisure hobby. For gardening has a natural affinity with the art of education, of bringing up children, since both have to do with the care and growth of living and growing organisms. It was not a mere coincidence that Froebel always compared the teacher to a gardener in his writings and called his children's school "kindergarten." It is a living and truly creative activity which gives scope for the training of the æsthetic sense; through it may be established that communion with Nature which brings a sense of peace and repose to the individual so highly prized by the best spirits of the East. Further, it may give valuable help in the teaching of Nature Study, Botany and Geography which otherwise run the risk of becoming classroom abstractions. When the world—and educational authorities—become really civilized, we can look forward to every school, especially the school of young children, being situated in a pleasant garden, whose beauty and peace will act unconsciously on the minds of children and help them to grow into that grace and repose

which Wordsworth cherished for his 'Nature's Child':

She shall be sporting as the fawn
That, wild with glee, across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And her's shall be the breathing balm
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute, insensate things.
The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willows bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

It will be the school garden more than anything else that will act on them 'by silent sympathy.' But this will be possible only if the garden is their own creation, not a ready-made, gardener-kept show which they discover to be as much a part of their surroundings as the school rooms. There can be nothing calculated to give more joy and pride to the members of a school community than to be able to say: "This is *our* garden; *we* have created it!"

(c) Besides woodwork and gardening, drawing, painting and, for younger children, modelling and cardboard making are means of creative self-expression. The child is, as I have already stressed, by nature a creator and delights in leaving his impress on his environment, in giving a concrete form to the projects and ideas playing in and on his mind. That is why 'play' comes so naturally to the child because in play he can 'create' most easily by letting his manipulation and imagination give shape to whatever physical materials are available. Through the medium of pencil, paper, paints, clay, cardboard, etc., a child will learn under proper guidance to express himself with facility and this work, partaking of the nature of free play, will have a wholesome influence on his culture and personality.

The above illustrations deal with creative activities in which the element of manual work predominates. But there are certain other types of activities, equally useful and important, in which the intellectual and academic element is more dominant and they also fulfil the conditions which have been laid down in a preceding paragraph.

SCHOOL SOCIETIES AND CLUBS

In any active and well conducted school there will spring up, more or less spontaneously, a number of societies and clubs to cater to various corporate interests and purposes, organized and maintained by the students' initiative and enthusiasm. In its healthy and active environment, boys with like interests and hobbies will be naturally drawn together and form small groups to work out their special lines of interest. With wise direction and a little timely encouragement, these groups may become centres of vigorous and growing intellectual interests. There may be one group collecting botanical specimens for the school museum, another studying special topics of history and writing papers on them, a third going out on geographical excursions or exploring factories and local industries and a fourth learning the art of public speaking. There would probably be a Photographic Society also recording school activities and scenes of outdoor excursions and tours, a Literary Society where students will sit and enjoy, at their ease, good literature, fiction and stories. There will also be clubs for games, sports and scouting, the last one being particularly

rich in hitherto unrealized possibilities, for it can be made a central activity linking and weaving together many of the academic and practical hobbies and pursuits of children. The great advantage of such activities in school is that they impart a new vitality to the whole of school learning and provide excellent training for the initiative, resourcefulness and leadership of the students. It is through managing such organizations and functions and dealing with men and things that many of their sterling qualities are brought out and displayed. They carry further the knowledge and interests initiated at home or in school and often lay the foundation of what may later turn out to be one's master-passion or life-pursuit. For has not many a public man truly found himself in the debating hall of his school or college union and many an explorer been discovered and trained, in a real if modest sense, through the small excursions and explorations organized by school boys?

THE SCHOOL MAGAZINE

The natural outcome of the vigorous functioning of school societies and clubs should be a school organ that would record their doings and

activities so that the whole school may keep in touch with what is going on in the various groups that constitute it. It will also provide a healthy outlet for the children's desire and innocent vanity of self-expression in some tangible form. The magazine is, therefore, important as an organ of the intellectual life and varied activities of the school and as providing an objective and a motive for the written outpourings of its students. A good essay, written for the teacher, will not then seem like an entry into a blind alley; it may lead to the light—the limelight!—of the school magazine. Thus the achievements and activities—literary, artistic, practical—of the various groups are integrated as it were, in the school magazine. Besides, it also provides valuable discipline and training in organization and executive ability for the members of the editorial staff who are connected in different capacities with the work. It will be useful, therefore, to associate with it as many pupils as possible and not make it the closed preserve of two or three students only. Any one interested to know what an incredible change of atmosphere can be brought about in a school through this venture will do well to read the account of one such experiment given

by Ernest Young in his delightful book, 'The New Era in Education.' It shows how, *under capable guidance*, a school magazine may become not only a record but a creator of active, intellectual life.

THE SCHOOL EXHIBITION

The annual exhibition in school, called by Sanderson of Oundle a 'conversazione,' should bring together and display in a well-arranged and striking form all or the best of the educative and constructive work done by the boys in or outside the school. This will give the boys a strong incentive to work willingly and at the top of their form all the year round so that, on this occasion, their parents and other interested members of the local community may see for themselves the creative work being done by them and learn to take pride in the artistic and practical achievements of the school. In India particularly, where contact between the school and the local community is slight and parents come into the presence of the Headmaster only when something is wrong, this will serve as an opportunity to draw them together into pleasant companionship. Moreover, this will also be an opportunity for the boys themselves to get a composite view of their

own productive work done during the year, and if it is a regular annual function, it will be a means of transmitting the legacy of the older boys to the younger ones and thus building up a distinct tradition of good work and *esprit-de-corps* in school. It will prove to be a very valuable stimulus to school life as a whole and provide worthy hobbies and interests for many pupils with varying tastes and capacities. I believe, it is possible for every school to make a start in this direction on a modest scale, for many of these activities do not involve much outlay of money. But they do demand from the teaching staff intelligence, enthusiasm, patient foresight and planning of students' work.

It may be worth while to indicate in passing what this Exhibition will display or at least mention the more important of its features and exhibits. There will be:

1. Specimens of art work—painting, drawing, calligraphy, modelling, etc.
2. Specimens of handicrafts—wood-work, metal work, book binding, science apparatus made by boys.

3. Collections of plants, seeds, botanical exhibits, stamps, pictures and such other things as students take delight in hoarding and as can be used for making teaching more effective.
4. Illustrations—maps, charts, diagrams for the teaching of history, geography and science and various graphic representations of statistics relating to local conditions or other aspects of knowledge.
5. Students' essays, papers and different kinds of written work, care being taken to choose only the best of those submitted.

SOCIAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Finally, I may refer to another set of activities—namely, those that are inspired by the motive of social service. It is not possible to enter here into any detailed discussion of what is possible in this direction. By way of illustration, special mention may be made of one such activity which has been tried in many schools and should be more largely adopted, *i.e.*, manual

service undertaken not for the sake of acquiring technical skill but for the repair and upkeep of school furniture and equipment and the cleanliness and beautifying of school environment. Children should, as a part of their general training, be taught to feel responsible for keeping their surroundings nice and clean and not to grudge personal labour for the sake of this worthy purpose. The experiment has been tried in many Bulgarian schools of giving one day each month and one whole week at the end of the year to work of this kind when boys devote themselves to the service of the school by cleaning the garden, repairing the roads, mending school desks and chairs and generally overhauling the whole school from top to bottom. How this adds to their love for and attachment to the school—a school ‘shaped by their own hands’—can be easily imagined.

Some years ago, I came across a similar experiment carried out at the Hali Muslim High School, Panipat, which has the good fortune to have for its Secretary a gentleman with great educational vision and imagination. The school has set aside, at the instance of the Secretary, one hour a week for each class (which they call ‘the

hour of service') when all boys of the class spontaneously and joyfully take up service of some kind for the sake of the school. They clean up the school rooms, repair the roads so far as they can and, in the carpentry class, mend broken chairs and desks. There is a Persian wheel attached to the school well which is worked by them in turn to water the garden which they have themselves planted. Now, it is impossible to overestimate the moral and social value of such corporate service, for it is really in carrying out willingly and honestly these little duties and humble services, inspired by some great purpose, that the character of an individual is slowly and surely forged. I have seen the Secretary of the school, an old and distinguished alumnus of Aligarh, personally assisting the teachers and the boys in removing bricks from the courtyard of the school and generally cleaning it up after some building operations. Is there a better and truer way to make boys realize the meaning of 'the dignity of labour' or to appreciate the inspired gospel of Thomas Carlyle: "All true work is sacred The latest gospel in the world is: 'Know thy work and do it.'"

How can we then in the face of all these

experiments and this irresistible evidence of what a school may become, confine school work to the learning of the three R's and a few other dry 'subjects'? In the reconstruction of education that awaits us and our successors, we shall have to change radically the nature of our school environment, making it dynamic and creative instead of being passive and mechanical; we shall have to enrich the curriculum by the introduction of vital and worth-while subject-matter and to bring methods of teaching and discipline into living relationship with the motive forces of community life. The schools will thus become active and joyous communities of youth, open to the best influences of the environment, providing within them scope for all kinds of creative activity—manual, intellectual, social and artistic—catering for the needs of work as well as leisure and above all, offering to the child a life that will be intrinsically interesting and worth-while to him, both immediately and later. It is to the fashioning of this living, creative environment within the schools that the teachers should dedicate all their efforts and energies.

CHAPTER IV

THE SCHOOL AS THE CENTRE OF COMMUNITY LIFE

I

IN the last two chapters, we have examined the characteristics of the school as an active and creative environment. In this, I propose to deal with the relation of the school to the environing life of the community whose purposes it is meant to subserve, and to work out some of its implications for the organization of school activities. To place this matter in its proper perspective, it will be helpful if we recall to our mind the *social* view of the educational process which is pertinent to the subject under discussion.

Education is a social affair and the school master is charged by society with the duty of training and bringing up the youth that they may be able to participate effectively in the life of the group to which they belong. They have got to come into active possession of the cultural and institutional heritage which has been bequeathed to them by their predecessors, for without the

light of experience, stored up in books and in other ways, they will grope in the dark and their efforts will be wasteful indeed. Nor will they be in a position intelligently to evaluate and reconstruct their culture in the light of their present needs. This point of view indicates the true conception of school work. We are far too apt to consider and decide educational problems from an exclusively individualistic point of view, neglecting the social relationships and bearings of education. We forget that education—whether in schools or colleges—is after all not an isolated activity but related at all points to life and responsive to all the forces that play on it. The school is “an idealized epitome” of social life reflecting within it the elements of all the worthwhile major activities that make up the work of Society. The notion that the school just trains an individual—trains his ‘faculties,’ his senses, his mind,—has been exploded. For it leads one naturally to ask: trains with reference to what? and provides no clue to a satisfactory answer. The individual has certainly to be trained, but with reference to, and for the sake of, the needs, demands and ideals of the bigger society outside. And since these demands are always changing,

enlarging and modifying themselves, it is necessary that the school should be in vital *rappor*t with the life outside school. Otherwise there is the danger—which is, unluckily, an actual fact in our country—of its being dominated by a rigid formalism and of substituting the ghosts of the past for the realities of the present. There is the danger, I repeat, of its cultivating an air-tight exclusiveness and exalting the value of mere symbols over the forces and phenomena of life which they were originally meant to represent. Literature becomes there, as it did with the scholastics, a drill in niceties of grammar and subtleties of logic and dialectics—it is no longer an epitome of the hopes and sufferings, the achievements and failures of generations that have been. Mathematics is conceived, not as a social tool valuable for the measurement and understanding of all the quantitative phenomena of life, but a juggling with abstract symbols and such inane problems as determining, say, the quantity of food consumed by three oxen and a half in two years, two months and four days at the rate of 2 seers and $11\frac{1}{2}$ chhatacks a day! I am quoting the kind of problems one actually finds in school text-books and many teachers will

probably be able to supply other equally ridiculous examples. They are valuable, because they indicate how the gulf has widened between knowledge and life—to the detriment of both. Similarly, Science is not taught as the fascinating record of the struggle of the human mind against Nature's forces and the wresting of Nature's laws by patient observation and research. It is not presented to them from the point of view of 'Science in the service of Man' but as abstract laws and formulæ which the student has to memorize as the Brahmins of old memorized *mantras* or people memorize verses from Holy Books to-day. But while the latter can bring forward the apology (or the justification?) that they do so for the salvation of their souls, the former are denied even that consolation and can plead nothing as an excuse beyond the rigours of Examinations.

I have made this digression to bring out the divorce which has unfortunately occurred between the school and life and to emphasize the fact that, unless points of contact are established and a rapprochement brought about between the two, education would remain ineffective and artificial, incapable of being utilized as an instrument of

social progress. There is no educationist of modern times who has realized this situation more vividly and done more to remedy it than Dr. John Dewey of America. He has stressed, in no uncertain terms, the need of referring all school learning and problems back to life, from which they originally emanated. Discussing the change that is working its way in the spirit and the teaching of schools through the introduction of active occupations, typical of the outside social situations of adult life, he sums up thus:—

“To do this means to make each one of our schools, an embryonic community, active and with types of occupations that reflect the life of the larger society, and permeated throughout with the spirit of art, history and science. When the school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guarantee of a larger society which is worthy, lovely and harmonious.”*

Our first problem, then, is to transform schools into miniature “communities” where the

* School and Society.

child learns through direct living. They are, at present, just "places to learn certain lessons having some abstract and remote reference to some possible living to be done in the future." This transformation is only possible when the element of common and productive activity has been introduced in it so that through participation and shared duties, they will learn the lessons of self-discipline, leadership and social organization without which community life is impossible. If the motive and organization for corporate work are missing in the school, it will not be possible to induce in the students that social spirit which alone can make them active and efficient members of their group life.

The next problem is to bring the school out of its isolation and connect it organically with all the worthy aspects of community life. This involves, on the one hand, the utilization in school of the child's experience, gained outside, the basing and linking up of his studies with what knowledge and information and interests he brings with him to school. There is a great deal of waste in the school at present on account of the failure of teachers to utilize this vital experience of the boys for the purposes of effective teaching.

It is obvious that the most abiding elements of his knowledge and skill—his insight into social ethics and forms of civilization, his appreciation of adult values—are gained in the home, on the playground and in intercourse with his friends, relatives and other people. It is for the teacher to press these into his service, to connect his academic symbols with their real meanings as embodied in the community life of which the child is gaining first-hand knowledge every day. He has to make it clear, for example, that geography is nothing but a systematic and somewhat formal account of the facts and phenomena of animal, plant and human life which the child is coming upon every moment of his life; that composition is but another way of communicating experiences, ideas and feelings that we communicate every day through speech; that arithmetic or botany or any other school subject is but an epitomized and symbolic representation of the business life or the farm and garden life which they observe for themselves outside their school. This method of presentation will preserve the unity and continuity of the child's experience and make possible the inter-play of influences between the school and the outside world. It will bring to school

studies a gain in the form of greater concreteness and vividness and more spontaneous interest on the part of the child. Conversely, the out-of-school life of the child will benefit by the refining and enlarging influence of school ideas which will be carried over from the class room to the child's home life. This will, no doubt, involve a change in our point of view and an abandoning of some of the most cherished conceptions which have been traditionally held with regard to the organization of the school life. It will mean exalting co-operation above competition, shared activity above passive reciprocity, a recognition of the value of play and children's hobbies and a readiness to discard the present highly systematized and logical methods of approach in favour of others which may seem less organized but are in reality more psychological. The starting point will be, not systematized bodies of knowledge arranged, classified and each ticketed with a name, but the immediate environment and the community life around the child. The orthodox pedagogues would first sneer and then protest, but the gain to the children, in joyousness and release of their creative powers, is worth both the sneer and the protest.

So far I have indicated but one important aspect of this problem—that is, the school should be in intimate contact with community life. But there are two other closely connected problems which require to be considered briefly in order to complete the picture. Firstly: what are the methods that have been tried or may be tried to bring about this contact? Secondly: what implications has this general principle for the different kinds of schools in India?

The first problem need not detain us long because that is really a problem which has to be solved by every school individually. It depends on the peculiar circumstances of the school and the type of life and occupations to be found in the locality. A primary school teacher in a rural area can do much towards the betterment of rural life and incidentally the establishment of his own position and prestige in the community. But there is a larger aspect in which this one is included. It is not merely the teacher who has to make himself the centre of community life and a radiating source of light and learning—it is the school as a whole that has to assume this position. The present weakness in the position of the school system in India is that the people do not realize,

and cannot realize, that the school is one of *their* institutions, is *their* concern. For all practical purposes, it is just as much an official concern, a Government institution, as the law court or the Railway or the prison. It is got to be made what the Germans and the Scandinavians happily call "Volkschule," a real "*people's school*."

A "people's school," must obviously, be based on the people's needs and problems. Its curriculum should be an epitome of their life. Its methods of work must approximate to theirs. It should reflect all that is characteristic in the life of the surrounding locality. In the rural areas, for example, the school should help the children to realize sympathetically the problems of rural life and train them to take part in it effectively when they have finished schooling. An acquaintance with plants and animals, with agriculture and gardening, with the laws of personal hygiene and sanitation, with the valuable and injurious factors in village life should be considered more important for the village school-boy than abstract arithmetical calculations and the learning of a foreign language. He should come to love nature and appreciate the significance of productive manual work, valuing theoretical and

academic studies for the enlarging influence they have on the culture of his personality and the light they throw on the problems and difficulties which he finds around him. Similarly, in an industrial area, the school should make the child familiar with industrial tools and processes, and the conditions of life in the factories so that he may appreciate both the technical and the human elements of the situation. He should begin to take an interest in the multifarious civic problems which have been ushered into existence by these larger social changes, valuing books and studies, again, as sources of knowledge relevant to his efficiency as a human being and as a productive member of society. If the school curriculum remains as bookish as it is at present, if in the organization of its time-table and teaching methods and discipline it does not allow for the special circumstances of the locality, it will fail to get a grip on the imagination, the sympathy and the support of the people.

But that is not enough. The school has to go further and actually interest itself in the welfare of the community. Experiments of various kinds have been tried in different countries to bring about this close co-ordination between the

school and community life. Reference may be made, as an illustration to what is known as the 'Gary Scheme' in America. I need not go into details of this scheme here but will simply refer to the two basic ideas which underlie it in order to show that there is nothing extraordinary about them and that, if our view of the function of the school were accepted, such schemes would suggest themselves naturally to us.

Firstly, this scheme brings the teaching of various subjects into active touch with community life, e.g., teaching of Physics and Chemistry with reference amongst other things, to the purity of municipal water and confectionary, or the teaching of Civics with reference to actual municipal life. Members of the community, belonging to various walks of life, are invited to give the benefit of their direct, first-hand experiences to the school-boys. Secondly, actual use of the school building is made by the parents in the evening. It becomes their club and a centre for exchange of ideas—a sort of social "clearing house"—where teachers and parents of the boys can meet and discuss in a friendly way, the problems with which they are faced—both educational and social.

The advantages of such an arrangement are obvious. The school becomes truly the centre of community life, from which can radiate light and learning and movements of reform. The taxpayers feel that they are really getting a return for their money and they become actually interested in the welfare of the school, which is thus taken out of its isolation and reinstated in its true position as an important social centre. The teacher too, can improve his position and prestige and become the leader of the social group if he has the capacity to do so. The boys gain tremendously by learning their sciences and other subjects in the context of their actual social setting, and they can carry over their knowledge easily from the school to the life of the community with which they have already made their acquaintance.

Finally, let me indicate in a somewhat dogmatic way—because all the details cannot be given here—some of the things which an average Indian school can undertake.

(1) Both in rural and in urban areas, the schools should become centres of adult education. They should conduct a regular campaign against illiteracy and educate the parents, teaching not

only the three R's but initiating them into the ordinary rules and laws of hygiene, social organization and corporate living. The teachers and senior students should be associated in this work, for it provides valuable discipline in social service. I wish the Government and the local bodies had the imagination to realize the possibilities of this work and would undertake it, giving allowances to teachers to conduct these evening classes. But so long as enough imagination is denied to these public bodies, it would be worth the while of the schools to initiate this movement as a labour of love and I feel sure that they will be ultimately repaid for it in a variety of ways.

(2) All schools should organize some sort of "social survey" clubs which would undertake to investigate into some of the crying needs and problems of the neighbouring community life, e.g., the condition of the roads, the drainage of the town or the village, the hygienic and sanitary condition of the surrounding areas, the sources of epidemics, the supply of food stuffs, the main industries and occupations of the locality. Each investigation will be undertaken by a small group of boys who are interested in the problem and

have made some study of the subject and they will work under the guidance of a teacher who will help them and suggest lines of attack. They may, at the end, draw up a report and offer suggestions which may, if necessary, be forwarded to the municipal committee by the Headmaster. It is difficult to exaggerate the possibilities of useful work implicit in such undertakings. Old teachers may sneer at such unorthodox activities but all thoughtful people are gradually coming round to the belief that a study of the child's immediate environment should form an essential part of his early education. Moreover it will have a very vitalizing influence on his school studies, because they will now gain the illumination of a motive and a purpose, and acquire a concreteness and reality which have been denied to them hitherto.

(3) As a corollary of the above, it follows that there should also be some kinds of social service leagues, for it is not enough to *know* the defects in our environment, we have to make our own little contribution to putting things right. These leagues would be used whenever an occasion would arise for their help—at the times of a flood or an epidemic or a festival or

a procession when order has to be maintained amongst the public. If necessary they could be profitably amalgamated into the scout organizations which avowedly keep such aims before them. These leagues could also take up work of helping the poor and needy students within the school by providing books and other similar helps. Not only have such things been done in other countries but I know of several institutions in India where such work is being successfully done by students. If it is true that what one man has done another man can do, surely it would be truer to say that the social service work attempted by one school can be attempted with reasonable success by others as well.

Nor is such social service to be confined to the schools only. I have used this word really as representative of all educational institutions. It is even more the duty of the Colleges and the Universities to take a hand in the reconstruction of national life and to extend the scope and sphere of higher education and culture beyond their local habitation to the whole country. In other countries, especially in Germany where I had some opportunity of studying the student activities after the war, I was struck with the

tremendous amount of work undertaken and successfully carried out by the students of the Universities and the Colleges. But for them, intellectual life and the student population would have been literally starved to death. In fact, they can be said to have built up anew the shattered fabric of their national life on the strength of their own initiative and resourcefulness.

Education, therefore, should be taken out of its seclusion and reinstated into its true position as the premier social and intellectual activity of mankind. Unless the schools can respond, in accordance, of course, with their special needs and circumstances, to the ideas that have been expounded here, they will not succeed in exerting any powerful or vitalizing influence on national life. And the present discontent against the results of education will grow apace and lead to unhappy consequences which no educationist can contemplate with equanimity.

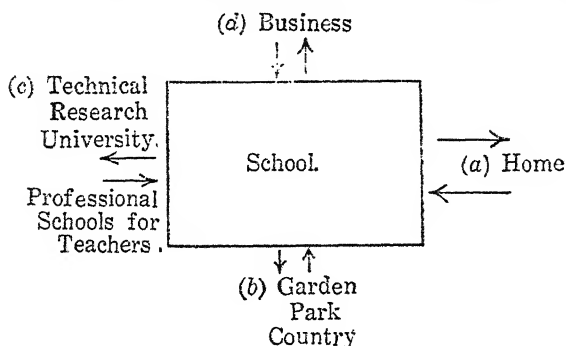
II

By way of summing up this discussion about the School of the Future and bringing before the readers a schematic picture of this school, it

will be helpful to reproduce three diagrams borrowed from Dewey's "School and Society," to show how it will be organically connected with the life of the community, how its internal life will be organized on the basis of productive and constructive social activities and how it will, in consequence, be transformed into a vitalizing and creative environment where children will live in close contact with all that is of permanent and abiding value in the achievements of the human race and thus grow in understanding, appreciation and control. I have also appended brief explanatory notes with each diagram, following in the main, the elucidation provided by Dewey himself.

DIAGRAM NO. I

(The School in Relation to Its Environment)



In this diagram, the school is conceived of as an organic part of social life, interconnected with the various important institutions of society, acting on them and being reacted upon in return and deriving its curriculum and subject matter from the rich and varied life of adult society. The following points are specially indicated:—

(a) Free interplay of ideas, influences and materials between the home and the school.

(b) Relation with the natural environment, *i.e.*, geography in the widest sense.

(c) Interaction between the highest and the lowest parts of the system. The work being done—in the field of Psychology, Sociology, Biology, etc.—in the Universities and in the Training Colleges will enrich the understanding of school methods and problems and, the validity of their theoretical research will be tested in schools at the touch-stone of practice.

(d) There will be free play between the school and the forces and needs of business and industry; not a preparation for any particular calling but a bringing to the child's consciousness of the business and economic relations of society—factory, bank, labour, crafts, agriculture as corporate activities. The task of the

school will be both to provide a pre-vocational bias by offering alternative courses in the higher classes and to liberalize the economic aspect by showing its relationship with larger and more important life purposes.

DIAGRAM NO. II

(Showing in a Symbolic form the "Lower Storey" of the School)

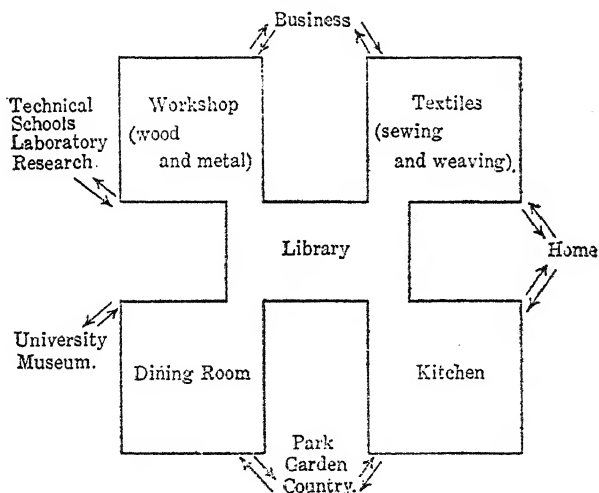


Diagram No. II (as well as No. III) represents not the architectural plan of the School but give an idea of school activities and its internal environment in a symbolic form. No. 2 mainly

indicates the practical side of school work and brings out the following points:—

1. On the one side are the kitchen and the Dining Room with obvious connections between them and the home activities as well as the physical environment. In connection with occupations centring round them will be learnt a good deal of school geography, botany, agriculture, domestic science and other useful knowledge.

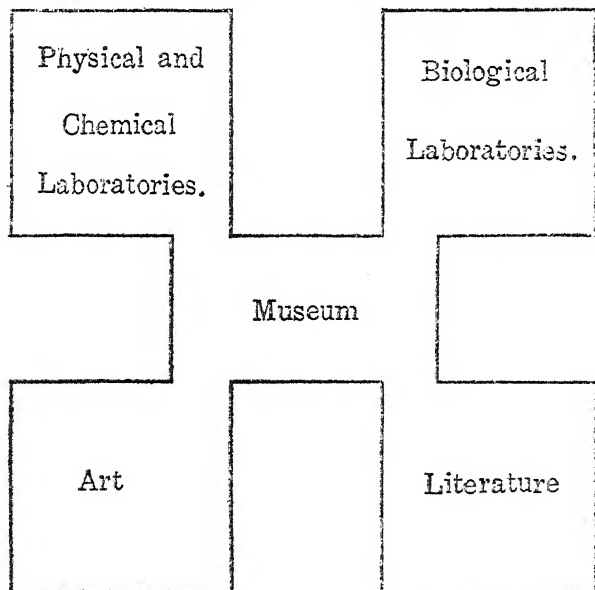
2. On the other side are the wood and metal workshops as well as rooms for weaving and sewing which, between them, represent some of the most important industries of civilized life, involving acquaintance with tools and industrial processes and products, and drawing in its train knowledge belonging to arithmetic, geometry, mechanics, etc. The mutuality of the interaction between the school and the business life is indicated by means of two-way arrows.

3. The library, situated in the centre, indicates that all these activities will be illumined, liberalized and given an enriched significance through the widening and systematization of knowledge that will occur as a result of self-initiated and teacher-guided study. The library stands for classes, discussion groups, theoretical

explorations arising out of felt needs of practical activity. It also shows that while book knowledge is subsidiary to activity, it is all important as interpreting and expanding knowledge and increasing the children's power and control.

DIAGRAM NO. III

(Showing in symbolic form the "Upper Storey" of the School)



This diagram is a symbolic representation of the theoretical side of school activities, showing

how theory will grow out of practice, how problems created will be brought to the laboratories for understanding and experimental elucidation. The following points may be specially noted:—

(a) Physical, Chemical and Biological problems arising in the workshop or the garden will be taken to their respective laboratories and worked out there.

(b) All true art grows out of the artisan's work and craftsmanship. The more concrete work being carried out in the practical workshops will lead to the activities of drawing, painting, designing and modelling in the Art room.

(c) Literature will be a co-ordinating factor and a liberalizing influence over the entire work of the school: literature, which will include not only prose and poetry of a high order enshrining within it all that men have suffered, hoped for and transmitted into artistic expression, but also the other elements of the Humanities; history and human geography, etc.

(d) The Museum, placed in the centre, is meant to symbolize a collection of all creative work, whether done in the school or obtained from outside, to act as an inspiration and a source of culture.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION FOR HAPPINESS

In the title of this chapter I have coupled two words which do not usually keep company and their conjunction might be objected to, both on grounds of facts and of ideals. As education is at present imparted, particularly in schools, it does not promote happiness; whatever happiness and sunshine manage to work their way into the life of children and youths on their way to adulthood, come, as it were, adventitiously—not provided by the school consciously, but as a by-product of their associated life and of their natural impulses towards finding joy in the bare fact of living. In the institutions of higher education, the colleges and the Universities, there is a good deal of pleasant social life and fellow feeling; games and sports and corporate activities of various kinds find their way into them and, except when the dread of examinations is too imminent to be happily ignored, students manage to have a ‘nice time’ which is proved by the fact that they often recall with pleasure the reminis-

cences of this care-free period of their life. But here, too, we are faced with the question: Are they being educated *for* happiness? Does their education equip them with the intellectual outlook and the emotional qualities which are necessary for leading a happy life? It is one thing to enjoy life in the specially prepared and sheltered environment of a College or a University and quite another to make a good, pleasurable bargain of life in the wide, unsheltered world where one must rely on one's own resources and draw strength and inspiration from the inmost recesses of one's own being. If it were true that our higher education succeeded in training people *for* happiness, we should be justified in assuming that the measure of happiness should be fuller and more generously distributed amongst the educated classes than amongst the illiterate peasants, labourers, craftsmen who have never had the benefit of any formal education. But our experience of the discontent and mental and emotional unhappiness which characterize the life of the educated people of today warns us against all such assumptions and leaves us wondering why education and happiness do not go together.

The moral idealist on the other hand, might come down upon us heavily from an entirely different point of view. He will not challenge the facts of the situation but seriously question the validity of our premises. Why *should* there be an education for happiness? Life is a hard task-master and provides for the thronging millions no prim-rose path of pleasure and enjoyment. Any dalliance with the idea of happiness, in the tradition of the hedonists, will bring well-merited punishment on the offender's head in due course. You may perhaps succeed in making education pleasant and sugar-coated, in sheltering children and adolescents from the routine and drudgery and self-denial which life demands but—to what end? Tomorrow when your soft, hot-house nourished scholars go out into the modern world of stress and competition and temptations, they will find themselves hopelessly bewildered, tragically incapable of dealing with its exacting situations and demands. It is not only from the point of view of efficiency and worldly success that the idealist will object to our position; he will also invoke the moral law and perhaps 'the categorical imperative' and ask, with that air of disdain

which superior knowledge brings in its train, what we purpose to do to strengthen the child's moral fibre and train him for a life consecrated to the service of what is just and right and true, rather than what is expedient, easy and self-gratifying. Thus the burden of proof lies on the thoughtless person who couples education with happiness; he has to show that it is *possible and desirable* to bring together these two terms, in the interests both of childhood and of society at large.

Before attempting to analyse the assumptions—and, to my mind, the *wrong* assumptions—which back up these objections, it will be useful to state my own position in this matter unambiguously. I believe that it *is* certainly possible so to organise schools and to impart education that the process brings joy in its train and gives greater zest to the life of the children. So far as our own country is concerned this is unfortunately far from being the actual fact; the educational institutions more frequently repress rather than release the creative energies of youth and cramp their self-expression.* But there is nothing intrinsic to the nature of the educative process

* See Chapter I, and VII.

which militates against the spirit of joy; in fact, if rightly interpreted, education will bring the students into ever more fruitful relations with their enriched environment and mature their growing powers of understanding and appreciation and thus give them a sense of increased self-confidence, of better harmony with their surroundings and a consequent feeling of peace and happiness. Secondly, I believe that it is not only desirable but imperatively necessary that education should strengthen this sense of happiness in individuals, giving them an intellectual and emotional equipment which will enable them to find it in whatever sphere of life their work may lie. It is one of the main functions and distinctive features of our "School of the Future" that it makes the process of education a joyous adventure for children and gives them attitudes and values which help them to find joy in the arduous and exacting work of their everyday life as adults. People who object to this view on ethical grounds have neither really understood ethics nor psychology. Let us try to come to grips with this contentious and multi-faced conception of happiness and see what place it occupies in the life and work of mankind.

If we appealed to the naive, unsophisticated experience of the ordinary 'man in the street' whose thinking has not been over-laid with philosophical reservations and inhibitions, we shall find that he always engages in an activity because it brings happiness in some form and abstains from an activity because it has the opposite effect. Of course it depends very greatly, almost exclusively, on his nature and training and the trend of thought in his particular community whether he will find this happiness in one object and endeavour or another. The factory labourer who works steadily and hard for eight or ten hours a day does not usually find his happiness in his actual work; he finds it possibly in the weekly remuneration which enables him to purchase various things and satisfy his most imperative needs. The patient farmer who gives his devoted service to land and looks up hopefully to the sky to respond to his efforts by sending down timely rain may gain his satisfaction not only in the ultimate products of his labour and their market price but also in the immediate fruits of his industry—the green and swaying fields, the ever fresh miracle of life sprouting out of the apparently dead earth. For him happiness resides

both in the goal of his activity as well as the activity itself; it irradiates the end as well as the means. An artist may likewise find the greater measure of his happiness in the travail of the spirit, in the adventurous reaching-out of his technique to capture the fleeting vision of his artistic imagination—even more so in these, than in the completed picture or the finished statue. The scientific worker, engaged in wresting the secrets of Nature, and reading the laws which govern her varying moods and her bewildering but orderly phenomena, may find *all* his satisfaction in the patient research by which, through the discipline of trials and errors and failures, he approaches truth more and more approximately. To him the industrial applications or the financial exploitation of his discoveries may be a matter of complete indifference, if not actual distaste. All these examples bring out three facts of great interest and significance. Firstly, these different people—from the factory hand manipulating the lever to Einstein at work in his library or laboratory—do not find their satisfaction or their happiness in one and the same activity or object. What yields happiness to one—say money or the power to

enjoy all that it can purchase—may be of very slight moment to another who may dedicate all his powers to, and derive all his happiness from, the successful development of the activity itself, regardless of its external consequences and implications. There are, therefore, grades and qualities of happiness which have differing ethical values and those who condemn all happiness as ethically an inferior objective, are apt to ignore this qualitative consideration. As we shall see presently the question of the ethical value of happiness is therefore bound up with the far-reaching question of what stimuli provoke it and whether they are in themselves of a superior or inferior moral significance.

Secondly, we must admit that, no matter what the nature and the cause of this happiness may be, if this does not motivate an activity, activity will simply cease to function. If the artist or the scientist gained *no* personal satisfaction out of his activity the paints and the brushes will lie idle, the canvas will dry up in course of time and the scientist's laboratory will remain barred and bolted. Nor will the patient hand of the farmer or the craftsman work at his trade, for if the activity brings no happiness—

that is, if it is not directed by an acceptable and willingly embraced motive and does not produce consequences which the individual thinks worth while—what is the use and the meaning of that activity? The only exception to this general rule that one could imagine might be the case of a man compelled to work under the threat of a whip or some external force and even there the negative satisfaction of avoiding a painful infliction is the motive of his activity. So we must recognize that, under all circumstances, a normal person would engage in an activity only if it results in giving him some satisfaction that he would himself appreciate. Even the extreme cases of people who inflict tortures on themselves voluntarily are no exceptions to this rule, for they differ from the ordinary people only in their subjective evaluation of happiness. If they did not feel that they were gaining happiness of a rare quality through the mortification of their bodies they would never expose themselves to those trials. The same view also explains not only the faith but the joyful self-sacrifice of the great martyrs who truly found their greatest happiness in what must appear to the eyes of unbelief, meaningless and wicked suffering. One

such martyr, dying of torture in the service of a noble cause is reported to have replied to his questioner with his last breath:

“Death is far sweeter to me than honey!”

Thirdly, it disposes of the widespread idea that happiness is synonymous with enjoyment or the pleasures of the body and the senses. Both the stern moralist and the self-indulgent pleasure-seeker have been responsible for the spread of this wrong conception, the former by their vehement invectives against it, the latter by their stupidity, their weakness, and their narrowness of mind. Our daily experience belies this unwarranted interpretation of happiness, for we find that men of all classes and all walks of life are prepared to risk their ‘pleasures’ in the narrow sense and to subject themselves to hardships, joyfully and willingly, in the pursuits of their cherished ends. The school boy scratching his knees and hands in the attempt to collect birds’ eggs, the explorer risking comfort and peace, his very life, in trying to penetrate into unknown regions of the world, the scientist playing with dangerous gases and poisons to extend the domains of knowledge, the prophet accepting the rebuffs and ridicule and persecution of his mis-

guided community are all examples, on different levels, of the same fundamental truth—namely, that people will suffer gladly in the interest of causes that they hold dear and the more intelligently, rationally and whole-heartedly these causes are cherished and appreciated the greater will be their success in resisting and overcoming all distractions and temptations besetting their path. So while their quest for happiness remains a constant factor, providing the motive force for human activity, their emotions and ideals attach themselves to new interests and pursuits in the achievement of which they find their highest and most abiding satisfaction, and all the hardships and suffering and self-restraint which they have to incur are accepted joyfully as necessary incidents in a developing experience that is intrinsically worth while. In analysing, therefore, the conception of happiness we must purge it of these unworthy associations that have gathered round it, so much so that both the popular mind and ethical doctrinaires have come to interpret it in its most limited and unsatisfying sense. In the true sense of the word, however, we are justified in the belief that the quest for happiness is an

essential ingredient of human nature, that it is not opposed to, or inconsistent with, the idea of prolonged effort and hardships, and that it may quite conceivably lead to a pursuit of the highest values in life and need not necessarily direct human activity only towards the satisfaction of material interests and carnal desires. Educationally, therefore, the problem is not whether happiness should or should not be considered a desirable end but whether happiness is derived from an ethically superior or inferior plane of activity, and how the right associations can be planted in the human mind.

II

What are the causes which are generally responsible for the unhappiness so common in the lives of men and women of today? The problem is an urgent one, because there is no doubt whatever that, in spite of the great advancement of science and the consequent improvement of people's material lot, there is growing unrest and discontent embittering people's lives, and, often for psychological reasons, they are unable to take advantage of the tremendous opportunities

and possibilities which the conquests of science have opened out for them. Nor is this discontent, this sense of incompleteness in life, the monopoly of those who have been denied the fruits of education; as have we already pointed out the educated classes are equally, if not more, a prey to this feeling of unrest and unhappiness. In so far as this unhappiness is the result of widespread economic causes, external to the individual, we cannot discuss them here. It is, however, quite obvious that, unless certain minimum conditions as to material comforts and the satisfaction of material wants are fulfilled, the average man cannot rise much beyond the stage of animal existence, and for him the question of any higher satisfaction does not arise. Such conditions are the provision of a reasonable modicum of food and shelter and the enjoyment of good health and social fellowship, often including normal sex and family life. The satisfaction of these wants is part of the biological demands of life and it is the business of society and the state to see that these are available for all the citizens in a reasonable measure. To the extent that groups of individuals suffer from serious want in this respect, the collective life of

society is ill organised and its resources are maldistributed and it should be the serious endeavour of all well-wishers of humanity to redress the deficiency. Our present pre-occupation, however, is with those psychological causes and attitudes which are largely within the individual's own control and which often make or mar a man's life irrevocably. Thus an individual who suffers from certain inhibitions and complexes like fear or self-absorption may lead an extremely miserable and incomplete life although he may possess material comforts and may be in a position to satisfy all his reasonable, and possibly many of his unreasonable, wants as well! On the other hand the creation and development of right attitudes and interests towards life may enable an individual to extract considerable degree of satisfaction, even of positive happiness, from apparently unfavourable and unfortunate circumstances. There have been cases of people suffering from all kinds of material privations and disabilities who have made a good bargain of their lives, enriching not only their own personality but also those with whom they have come into contact. The story of Helen Keller is certainly unusual but not exceptional.

Perhaps the most potent source of unhappiness in life is an attitude of exclusive absorption with one's own self and the many petty interests which centre round it.* An individual whose thoughts and emotions are constantly pre-occupied with his own ego is at the mercy of every chance mishap that befalls him and to him are denied all those compensations which make the severest of personal afflictions and sorrows tolerable for a man of wide cultural and human interests. For, death and disease and social disapproval and financial setbacks are matters of everyday occurrence and no individual who lives in this world can hope to escape these visitations. To the selfish, self-centred egoist these personal misfortunes are not just temporary annoyances, to be taken as part of the stream of life; they are for him the death-knell of mental peace and tend to paralyse the course of his normal activity. He develops the mentality of fear and faces life with the outlook of a miser. Instead of trying to challenge boldly the varied opportunities and experiences of life—the rough with the smooth, the pleasant with the

* Bertrand Russel's "Conquest of Happiness" provides an excellent discussion of this theme.

unpleasant—and drawing strength and inspiration and gaining enrichment of personal life from them, he shirks these encounters and, crouching within the trembling shelter of his own narrow self, he apprehensively counts his small store of blessings, afraid that they will be taken away by an unkind Providence and there will be nothing left for him! Cowards die many times before their death, said Shakespeare, and it is in this spiritual sense that the cowardly egoist suffers death over and over again. He is devoted to what Bertrand Russel has called “possessive happiness,” a type of happiness which depends for its maintenance on the acquisition of external things—wealth, power, competitive success—and is destroyed if these are taken away. As against this attitude towards life there is another, which is not interested so much in ‘possessive’ as in ‘creative’ happiness, not in “taking-in” but in “giving-out”—giving out of the self in the service of great causes and purposes which appeal to one’s imagination and devotion. The individual who has this attitude does not look upon his own ego and its petty interests as the centre of his Universe or, rather, as a self-contained and self-centred entity pitted against the rest of the world.

He finds his highest satisfaction and self-realization in taking part in the rich and multifarious life of the world; he enters boldly and wholeheartedly into the interests and forces which move his fellow men; he is sensitive and responsive to the pulsating life of society. By thus becoming a part of the general stream of human experience he expands the scope of his own ego which now partakes, so to speak, of the depth, the significance and the permanence which characterize the life of mankind as a whole. The small tragedies and misfortunes which affect him only in a personal capacity are now reduced to their proper proportion. They are real and poignant, no doubt, but they do not obscure the meaning of his existence or destroy the clarity of his vision, for he is now the servant of greater causes and the instrument of greater purposes. So long as these purposes continue to thrive, and his efforts, whether painful or pleasant, minister to their success he is happy. He has the joy of self-expression and self-realisation, for by losing himself in movements far greater than his own self, he *re-discovers* himself in a very real sense. This exposes also the hedonist's fallacy who devotes himself to the direct pursuit of happiness—which turns out

to be the pursuit of a mirage—instead of losing himself in work of a congenial nature which may bring all of his power and impulses into adequate and useful play. Work undertaken in this spirit and for the service of great interests lying outside our own selves does not savour of drudgery; it does not demand a superficially imposed self-denial, a discipline which is not the outcome, but the antithesis of freedom. "In fact," says Russel,* "the whole antithesis between self and the rest of the world which is implied in the doctrine of self-denial disappears as soon as we have any genuine interest in persons or things outside ourselves. Through such interests a man comes to feel himself part of the stream of life, not a hard separate entity like a billiard-ball which can have no relation with other such entities except that of collision."

It must, however, be conceded that, if the education of an individual has been defective and if his social environment is unlikely to give him glimpses of any higher or better ideals, he may quite conceivably find his happiness in limited and petty interests. Such is actually the case with a

* "Conquest of Happiness," page 247.

majority of people in the world at present. But the trend of my argument is that such happiness also will be necessarily limited and petty and of a very inferior quality and it will depend on such transitory and unreliable causes that any ordinary mishap may completely shatter the laboriously constructed edifice. On the other hand, if through education and self-discipline, the individual learns gradually to seek and find his happiness in the whole-hearted *effort* towards great and worthy ends, he will not be at the mercy of every chance misfortune. If, for example, he is working for a great social or political purpose of far-reaching human significance, nothing short of a great disaster or the failure of the entire movement will shake his faith and optimism, and even then he will be left with the satisfaction of having nobly loved and nobly lost. But, for the man whose entire energies and interests are focussed on securing a small job or getting the better of a rival in a small commercial deal or keeping his temperature at 97·8°, failure in his particular little effort will mean a death-blow to his happiness and peace of mind. In a novel of remarkable power recently published—"Three Cities" by Scholem Asch—an old Jew, steeped

in the wisdom of the ages, exhorts his young listener in these words:

“The world is a living entity just as much as the tiniest organism . . . we do not see it because we are a tiny strand in the great fabric, because we are so sunk in the emptiness the petty nothings of our individual existence that we have no time to perceive the greater life. Like worms we have crept into the dark caverns, the narrow gloomy passages of our individual existences and have no time left to rise into the clear, radiant world and to gaze at the mighty sun and the living light, Rise out of yourself, young man; tear yourself away from the darkness of your own petty life; then you will see the light, will feel the mighty pulse, the great heart-beat of the world.”

In this busy, practical age, impatient of rhetoric, anxious for quick returns and cynical of prophetic utterances, it may seem necessary to apologize for this quotation. But I am convinced that this lesson is persistently and emphatically needed for the present age when the pressure of economic and political forces threatens to disrupt the ties which bind the individual to the general life of humanity. It is necessary, however, to guard against the possible impression that this

view seeks to belittle the infinite value and significance of individual life. It really demands that individuality should gain in breadth and richness by being steeped into the greater life of mankind. That is what the greatest thinkers of the East—the prophets and Soofies (mystics)—have always taught: this losing of the self in a greater self and thereby gaining a more powerful individuality. On a more familiar plane, do we not see that the greatest poets and writers and philosophers have been those whose heart-beats coincided with ‘the heart-beats of the world,’ whose pulses beat in unison with its pulse-beats?

It is this same approach to life which eliminates another great and almost universal cause of unhappiness—Fear. The fear of the Lord may quite conceivably be the beginning of wisdom, but if it becomes a permanent attitude of the mind, if a person shirks from entering into the experiences, the risks and the adventures of life because he is afraid of possible consequences, then his life becomes not only incomplete and psychologically distorted but also unhappy. For the world swarms with occasions which demand courage and, if one does not accept boldly what

the revolving wheel of life has to offer, determined to make the best of it, one is apt to live in constant apprehension of possible misfortune. A poet expresses this courageous attitude in the words:

اگر خواهی حیات اندر - خطر زی

which may be rendered into English almost literally by the maxim: The secret of a joyous life is to live dangerously. Such an attitude of mind is helpful to the individual in two ways in gaining a sense of happiness. It protects him from the constant and timid anticipations of the misfortunes which the morrow may bring, an anticipation which robs a man of all peace of mind and paralyses his powers of action. Secondly, when he is actually confronted with a difficult or painful situation, he goes out boldly to meet it, reasonably hopeful, if not quite confident, of overcoming it by his courage and industry. He even finds a certain satisfaction and thrill in facing difficulties and dangers and, of course, experiences joy in conquering them. But courage or absence of fear has a wider connotation here than the mere capacity to face dangers boldly and not show nervousness when confronting them.

"It is not so much fear in the ordinary sense," says Dewey, "as it is an attitude of withdrawal, an attitude of exclusiveness which shuts out the beauties and troubles of experience as the things from which alone we can really learn and go on growing."* He insists on the development of a positive attitude of thought and emotions: that of 'going out to and welcoming all the incidents of a changing experience, even those which are in themselves troublesome.' It is the difference between those who say 'yes' to life, with all its difficulties, trials and temptation, who are prepared to throw themselves into the possibilities which it has to offer, without counting the cost like misers, and those who fight shy of it, because there may be dangers lurking in new enterprises and undertakings. The mental and emotional attitudes which dominate the latter are a source of great unhappiness because they cause them nervous apprehension at every step and tend to cramp and fetter their capacities for action. But it is not enough, as I have suggested above, to suppress the obvious manifestation of fear, for if that is done by an act of strong and conscious will,

* Dewey: "The Man and his Philosophy."

the feeling of fear may be driven underground and assume a domination over our unconscious mind, appearing in unrecognizable but potent forms and embittering the whole of our life. Psycho-analysis warns us seriously against the pernicious influence of repressed complexes, whether of fear or other strong emotions and instincts, and a good deal of modern unhappiness is due to the emotional conflicts and repressions and the lack of harmony which characterize the life of individuals and groups. These conflicts cannot be overcome unless we develop *positive courage* in ourselves which is not only physical but also intellectual and moral. Several psychological factors are involved in the creation of this positive attitude of courage in the larger sense, which not only includes the facing of physical dangers boldly but also the capacity to overcome the strong temptation to seek social approval at the sacrifice of one's freedom of opinion and action. For, the fear that dominates our life is just as much physical as that of the displeasure of the herd and we try in all sorts of ways to court its approval and to avoid its censure. Within certain limits, this motive is useful in the formation of character and helps to socialize the

individual. Carried to extremes, it produces the colourless, self-effacing, cowardly person who has no courage of his convictions, who deliberately suppresses his individuality lest it should incur the hostility of the group or assumes an attitude of hypocrisy, which is a subtle and dishonest form of fear and which persuades him to hide his true feelings and opinions in favour of those which happen to be popular. The courage that we desire to produce is a general attitude of mind and behaviour which permeates the entire life of the individual, equipping him with the capacity to face external dangers as also those subjective conflicts and temptations which demand an arduous self-discipline on his part.

The creation of this attitude is dependent on two factors, one of which we have already discussed—namely, the development of impersonal and objective interests which give a new depth and breadth to one's personality and redeem it from the over-powering sense of fear that often dominates the life of the selfish and self-centred egoist. The man who finds an adequate outlet for his powers in various healthy and useful interests, who throws himself wholeheartedly into the service of great causes, even

overcomes the paralysing fear of death, for he is not foolish or petty-minded enough to imagine that his physical death will be the end of the Universe. He has the genuine consolation, the sustaining idea, that his work will be carried on, without a break, by his successors and he will live in the ultimate triumph of his great purpose. By uniting his life with that of humanity, and in a sense, losing himself in it, he gains a true, if vicarious, immortality. It is in this sense that the poet linked the life of the individual with that of the community:

فرد قائم ربط ملت سے ہے ' تنہا کچھ نہیں
 موج ہے دریا میں ' اور بیرون دریا کچھ نہیں
 (اقبال)

"The individual exists because of the bonds that link him up with the community—alone, he is non-existent; just as the wave has an entity as part of the river—outside it, it is nothing." And it is in this sense, again, that the "martyr," the man who lives and dies in the path of the Lord, achieves immortality: "And do not call them dead who give their lives in the path of Allah; they live and, before their Creator, their deeds bear fruit."*

* The Holy Qurān.

The second factor which, according to Russel, is an essential constituent of true courage is a feeling of genuine self-respect. Real self-respect does not rest on, or result in, a selfish snobbishness or intolerance of others; it is the fruit of the quiet conviction that *potentially* our individuality is infinitely precious, that we are gifted by nature with the inalienable right to think our own thoughts and do our own deeds on the basis of our own first-hand experience. Any one, who surrenders this ultimate freedom for the sake of expediency or social approval, can never attain the greatness of true courage; to him, Socrates will always be an inexplicable monomaniac who foolishly preferred a cup of poison to the renunciation of his true opinions. His thoughts and actions will be a pale and hesitant reflection of his particular society and he will never achieve emancipation from the dark kingdom of fear.

From our preceding discussion, we can see how a good deal of modern unhappiness is due to the emotional conflicts and repressions from which our generation is suffering. The absence of freedom in the home and the school, the thousand subtle but powerful ways in which social coercion fetters the mind and conduct of the individual,

particularly in our country, the early repression of emotional tendencies and the consequent formation of complexes—all these hinder the normal, healthy developments of individual lives. This situation always becomes particularly accentuated when the forms and conventions of an old and established social order become out-of-date by the march of events and, instead of disciplining and guiding social energy into effective channels, choke the flow of social energy altogether. This is what is happening today in India and indeed to varying degrees, in the whole world. The modern political, economic and social forces have created literally a new world where time and space have been nearly abolished and many of the geographical and racial facts on which our cherished theories and assumptions are based have ceased to exist. But our thinking continues to move along the old, obsolete grooves; our loyalties are still absurdly narrow and our conception of human kinship and interdependence altogether vague and sentimental. In India, for example, the caste system is still a force to be reckoned with; political divisions are still based on religious and social rather than economic cleavages; ideas which might have been useful in

the extinct feudal order of society seek to impose their stifling sway on the modern world. The various institutions of society pull the individual in different directions and tend to split up the unity and integrity of his personal life. The economic motive conflicts with the religious, and the political loyalties are at logger-head with communal attachments. Little wonder, then that the bewildered youth who passes out of the secluded world of the school into the disorganised world outside loses his balance and fails to attain the sense of being at peace with himself or his environment. The problem as to how a better orientation can be secured is immensely complex, almost baffling, but a mere reference to its scope should make it clear that it cannot be tackled in schools alone and that, unless the whole trend of social organisation supplements the efforts of education, the results will be utterly disappointing.

Lastly, though not in order of importance, a very obvious and insistent cause of modern unhappiness is the economic and vocational malorganisation of society which deprives millions of people of the chance of doing any useful and congenial work. In this class must be included not only the unemployed who in the 'civilized'

countries live on the 'dole' and in others on private charity or starvation, but also the huge army of workers who do manage to earn their living somehow but whose occupations are totally uncongenial, leading them usually to an uninviting blind-alley. People generally realize how quickly a state of worklessness thoroughly demoralises a person, sapping his sense of self-confidence and self-respect. But there is not the same universal recognition of the incalculable social and individual harm that is done by the fact that most workers are compelled to slave at unsuitable tasks for which they are intellectually and temperamentally unfitted. This misfortune oppresses the educated classes even more pointedly, although from them we should normally expect not only a higher standard of work but also a higher standard of satisfaction *in* their work. While the average Indian peasant or craftsman—if he has not been replaced by the machine—does manage to find a certain amount of satisfaction and whole-hearted absorption within the narrow circle of his activity and interests, the average 'black-coated' product of the school or the college, slaving at the office desk or in the depressing atmosphere of law courts, is unable to find

any genuine self-expression in his work which has usually no meaning or inward significance for him beyond the fact that it brings him a petty remuneration. The result is that his whole life is over-weighted with a sense of failure—failure to make the best of his powers and aptitudes, failure to achieve either individual recognition or the sense of social service. Thus the loss of the country is twofold. On the one hand, unemployment amongst the educated classes decreases the total productive capacity of the nation, on the material as well as the intellectual side, and, on the other hand, the misdirection or only partial exploitation of the energies of those who manage to get into some employment still further reduces national output and has a most undesirable influence on their character and temperament. For, the outlook and character of a person are forged on the anvil of every day's work and, if this work is creatively and psychologically unsatisfying, he begins to suffer from a cumulative sense of frustration. The poignancy as well as the immensity of the problem make it one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, social and educational issue of the modern age, requiring the closest co-operation and concerted action on the part of

the schools, the Universities, the state and the captains of industry and the *simultaneous re-organization of education as well as the economic system* along more rational lines. The opportunity of a 'calling'—in the real sense of the word—which makes a genuine appeal to the worker is one of the primary conditions of a full and happy life and, so long as this opportunity is wholly or partly denied to a large proportion of human beings, they can never gain true happiness.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION FOR HAPPINESS (*Contd.*)

After this analysis of the main causes of unhappiness in life—an analysis that is not exhaustive but selects only certain outstanding features—we are confronted with the question: What can education do to remedy and improve the situation that has been revealed? Before defining the function and possibilities of education as an instrument for the resolution of the psychological and social conflicts which cause unhappiness, we must again stress the fact that education *by itself* cannot easily make over our subjective and objective worlds, for the youth as well as the adult is being constantly subjected to the influences of varied and complex social environments which powerfully determine the course of his development. Education has often, in the course of history, been inspired by ideals which were ahead of the existing social situation but usually its good influence has been undone by the forces of the social situation. It has been successful in vitally

transforming national character on a large scale only when it has synchronized with some great political, social or religious upheaval which has shaken the life of a community to its very foundations. Such was, for example, the transformation wrought in the Arabian society as a result of the advent of Islam. With this reservation in mind, we can proceed to indicate briefly the directions along which education may endeavour to re-orient itself for the attainment of this end.

We have seen that an attitude of exclusive self-absorption is one of the most potent causes of unhappiness. Our education, as at present organised, does not tend to eradicate but rather to strengthen this attitude. This is due to the fact that the living relationship between education and national culture and religion has ceased to function and therefore the general feeling is that education is merely a means for the improvement of one's material or economic position. Viewed in this light, education will be naturally, and quite reasonably, dominated by the spirit of selfish competition and personal aggrandisement. Its method of teaching and discipline and its general organisation all stress the individual aspect of the

child's life and prize competitive success above social service. Learning is a process of 'taking-in' which is not only a passive affair but one that is exclusive and individual in its essence; it does not partake of the nature of a cooperative activity in which the individual 'gives himself out' to the service of jointly worked out purposes. Moreover, the poverty and narrowness of the subject matter of instruction and the formal nature of most school work make it difficult, if not impossible, for the children to cultivate rich and varied interests which may add to their personal culture and prove a source of happy pre-occupation in later life.

The remedy for this situation lies in the enriching of the school curriculum as well as its many extra-curricular activities through which children satisfy their varied interests. Some concrete suggestions have been given about it in a preceding chapter.* The object of this endeavour should be to encourage children to throw themselves into all worthy forms of activity—literary, artistic, social and manual—so that they may learn to get out of their own selves and cultivate

* See Chapter III.

valuable objective interests which may be carried further and developed after their leaving the school. This broadening of intellectual and cultural curiosity, this quickening of sympathy for all that concerns human life is a perennial and inexpensive source of happiness which it is the business of schools and colleges to provide. Through an appreciative interest in literature and poetry, or absorption in some form of art or craft or social service the whole quality of individual life may be raised and its significance enriched. Culture has been defined as an "increased apprehension of meanings"; it is the capacity to read greater significance and derive great pleasure from the objects of everyday experience whose full import is not appreciated by an uncultured mind. Thus to the artistic eye the glorious procession of seasons, the phenomena of sunrise and sunset, in fact all 'things of beauty' are a joy for ever, and likewise he whose heart and mind have been quickened to feel sympathy with great human purposes and movements finds happiness in serving them. By bringing the child into actual contact with beautiful objects we can awaken his esthetic taste and lay the foundation of artistic interests. By the study and discussion of living

social problems and by organising the school into a free, social environment where there is mutual give-and-take and a practical sharing of duties and responsibilities, we shall bring the child to a consciousness of the social forces and the principles of associated living. The higher institutions, the colleges and the universities, should carry this social and political orientation of the adolescent further and through their study groups, discussions and class teaching they should strengthen his human interests, so that he comes to owe his emotional and intellectual allegiance to great and worthy purposes. The incompleteness and failure of much modern education is due to the fact that it does not inculcate loyalty to any great impersonal ideals but is content to provide a superficial smattering of knowledge and pseudo-culture and, at best, stimulate the desire to 'get-on' in the world at all costs. This modern attitude of 'externalism,' the desire to seek happiness in the possession of external things like money or titles or cheap popularity, makes us helplessly dependent on material objects and, in course of time, dries up the rich and invaluable sources of joy that are embedded in our own selves. It is the old folly of trying to gain the

whole world at the expense of one's own soul—a soul pregnant with valuable human interests, which we cultivate neither in our own life nor in that of our children. "The world is either a wonderful scene or a dismal one according to whether we bring wonder with us into it or the desire to possess as much of it as is possible in as short a time as possible. What we bring to the world in which we live always has and always will, at last, go back to the depths of our own beings."* The cultivation of these rich, varied and worthy interests that we have advocated will add richness and fullness to our being and thus transform for us the very world in which we are living.

What can education do to weaken the hold of fear on individuals, to develop positive courage and to resolve the emotional conflicts which rage within the children and the adolescents? We have, in general terms, already referred to the psychological factors involved in this process—the creation of a strong sense of self-respect in children which would reject everything low and inferior as unworthy of them and

* DEWEY: "The Man and his Philosophy."

their ideal of self, and, secondly, the cultivation of objective interests and an impersonal outlook on life. The former demands from teachers an unhesitating rejection of all methods of teaching and all devices of discipline which injure the child's self-respect. In the past, the ingenuity of teachers has been exercised far too much, in thinking out such methods and devices—with the good intention, of course, of making the backward boys and the defaulters ashamed of themselves! But the result invariably is either a loss of self-confidence and a consequent attitude of timidity or a loss of sensitiveness. It is time that the teachers tried the opposite method of strengthening self-respect in their pupils by encouraging their better work and creating in them the habit of unconsciously comparing all their performances—in learning as well as conduct—with the ideal of self they have placed before themselves. So far as the expansion of one's personality through the cultivation of objective interests is concerned, as an antidote to a feeling of perpetual fear, we have already discussed its relations to education viewed as a rich, creative activity. The school or the college that opens up fresh vistas of interests before the growing youth establishes new points

of contact between him and the great world that environs him and tends to transfer the emphasis of his emotions and thoughts from the ego-centric to the impersonal. While in school this process will be on the unconscious, or the sub-conscious, plane—the child throwing himself whole-heartedly and spontaneously into many co-operative activities—it is the business of the college and the university to make this a conscious and deliberately chosen attitude and for this purpose not only their academic teaching but the powerful array of social and personal forces should be set in motion and utilized.

But this right orientation of education and social life of schools is not by itself enough to eradicate the domination of fear and resolve the emotional conflicts. These are due not only to bad teaching but largely to many repressed complexes which are formed in childhood and adolescence through a system of repressive discipline. The development of a normal, healthy and frank disposition requires an atmosphere of freedom, an emancipation from the feeling that one's life is hedged round on all sides by external forces and restrictions. Discipline is effective and educative only to the extent that its

checks are taken up into the child's own being and transformed from external into accepted inner compulsions. But this condition is satisfied neither in the home, nor in the school, nor in the relationships of other social institutions. The parents, the teachers as well as the other social authorities exercise their power autocratically and the sanction behind them, more or less thinly veiled, is always force. The result is that they are able to secure only external conformity of behaviour at best. While outwardly abiding by the social conventions and accepting the social standards, their emotional life runs its independent course, often seething with a desire for revolt, for breaking down the barriers imposed on it. At home and in school one finds confirmation of this emotional conflict in the occasional outbreaks of temper and bursts of destructive mischief which occur in children, to the great surprise and annoyance of the self-complacent parents and teachers. Later, in adult life, the bonds of society sit heavily on the individual; even when he fails to accept them as being in harmony with his own needs and nature—as is often the case—he has to accept them because of the powerful sanctions of force and

social usage behind them. But, while actions and conduct may be enslaved by rules and regulations, thought and emotions are, in their essence, free—hence the emotional conflicts and the fear which characterize modern life. The problem of reorganization, I need hardly repeat, is just as much social as educational and must be based on a greater faith in the free expression of individuality than society has so far been willing to concede. Even where a state of excessive social and economic disorganisation or political disintegration demands a collectivist policy and a rigid regimentation of general life—as in Soviet Russia or Italy or America today—it can only be accepted very reluctantly as a temporary, ‘war-time’ measure. It can be ultimately justified only if it results in bringing about greater freedom and greater release of individual creative activity—and hence greater happiness—and can successfully abolish the domain of fear. Otherwise, bringing as it certainly does, great unhappiness and a sense of imprisonment in its train, it is unacceptable even as a temporary expedient.

Finally, let us face the problem of vocational malorganisation, responsible quantitatively

speaking, for the greatest measure of dissatisfaction and unhappiness in the modern world. In so far as its remedy lies in the better ordering and direction of economic and industrial life, it is an immense problem which lies beyond our present scope; for, it involves the complicated questions of hours of work and wages, elimination of drudgery, better distribution of wealth, a more just sharing of industrial control and a truce to the shameless exploitation of workers as a mere means to the ends of others. But even if we confine ourselves to the educational aspect alone, it bristles with difficulties and has given rise to greater differences of opinion than almost any other educational question. Should education train directly for vocational work? How shall we combine the values of a general and a vocational education? At what stage shall specialisation commence? These and many other similar questions involve theoretical considerations as well as practical question of curriculum, policy and organization which cannot be adequately considered here in all their bearings. Some reference to their pros and cons will be found in Part II of this book. Here the best way under the circumstances seems to be to present baldly and therefore

somewhat dogmatically my own views on the subject.

There is no doubt that Indian education has been far too bookish and academic, narrowly '*vocational*' in the sense that it trained students mainly for a limited number of clerical jobs and a few learned professions, too '*general*' in the sense that it has been out of touch with the economic and industrial life of the country. There is general dissatisfaction with the results it has so far produced—unemployment, over-crowding of colleges and universities with ill-equipped students, too much rush on a few services to the comparative neglect of other lines of productive activity, etc. There is reason and common sense behind the popular demand that education should become more practical and realistic so that pupils who pass out of the primary and secondary stages of education may enter into the various lines of useful vocational work. It is a very serious criticism against the educational system—made as far back as Pascal but applicable undeniably to Indian education today—that while "a man's choice of his trade is the most important thing in his life this crucial choice is about the one thing for which our public system of education has

made hardly any attempt to prepare its pupils. This is surely the craziest phenomena of a crazy world.”*

While agreeing, therefore with the general demand to introduce vocational features in our schools we cannot altogether endorse the popularly advocated corollary that schools, particularly the secondary schools, should become definitely technical and commercial, training directly for certain lines of vocational work. Such a change will seriously impair the efficiency of schools as instruments of culture and, while they may produce efficiency in a narrow sense, they will weaken those inner sources of appreciation and enjoyment on which individual happiness greatly depends. The introduction of vocational features should, therefore, be welcomed *not* because it will produce better typists or carpenters or smiths but because it will give valuable vocational bias and, properly utilized, educate children's practical and productive aptitudes which are apt to be neglected in the present system of education. Moreover the higher ranks of industry,

* Lord Percy in his Introduction to Ammott's "Education for Industry and Commerce in England."

manufactures and commerce, etc., require today a wider background of general knowledge and training, because their intellectual and scientific content has been enriched by modern inventions and demand greater adaptability, resourcefulness and more highly specialized knowledge from the workers. Thus in the interest of 'culture' as well as a far-sighted policy of 'efficiency' a wide, comprehensive education, embracing the academic as well as the practical subjects, should precede the specialized technical training. The length of this 'general' education will, of course, differ for the pupils in accordance with the nature and demands of the vocation that they are destined to enter, some branching off into work at the end of elementary school stage, others doing so at the conclusion of the secondary stage, while still others destined for certain 'learned' professions will carry on their general or partially specialized studies at the university. In most of the advanced western countries, e.g., England and Germany, the present tendency is to ensure some type of education for *all* children up to the age of eighteen, whether that education is provided in a full-time secondary school or in a

part-time continuation school. In our own country, at present, where there is no compulsory elementary education and no proper integration of the various stages of education, the problem cannot be envisaged on a universal scale and must be interpreted in other terms suitable to our own conditions. The problem is to deal with the children who actually pass through the elementary or secondary schools, with special reference to their aptitudes and the possible openings available in any particular locality.

In the movement that has been recently set afoot to make education vocational, there is a conspicuous lack of clear thinking. Besides the general criticism made above,—that it is narrowly conceived—the scheme is also open to the objection that it does not take into account consciously the psychological aptitudes of children, nor does it include a vocational survey of particular localities with a view to discovering the available occupations and the kind of training required. The problem of vocational *guidance* is an essential part of any sound scheme of vocational education but, so far as our country is concerned, there is no effective provision to meet this need or even a clear recognition of its

imperative nature. The U. P. Government has recently published a resolution on the reorganization of Secondary Education with a view to elicit public opinion on it. In the scheme there unfolded it is a curious omission that no mention is made of setting up any agencies for vocational guidance and direction. At the secondary stage there is to be a divergence of students into different types of schools—Commercial, Industrial, Agricultural, Arts and Sciences. But, unless there is a careful psychological examination of children at this stage of transition and the results of the investigation are supplemented with a study of their school records and the opinions of parents and teachers there will be no safeguard against their drifting into uncongenial lines of work, and not much improvement will be secured on the existing situation. In many European countries the technique of vocational guidance has passed the experimental stage and is officially recognised as an invaluable intermediary between education and industry. Thus in England the Institute of Industrial Psychology, under Dr. Myres, has developed a carefully devised technique of vocational testing. It advises parents on the vexed question of their

children's future, pointing out what lines of work they are likely to find most congenial. It has also "followed up" the later careers of these young workers to examine the validity of their tests and, after about ten years of this work, it has come definitely to the conclusion that such vocational guidance is a genuine help to young workers who might otherwise have become "foiled circuitous wanderers" knocking about from one occupation to another, denied individual satisfaction as well as the chance of rendering maximum social service. Taking a fairly large number of youths as the basis of their observations and calculations, it was discovered after a "follow-up" of their careers that, amongst those who did *not* take the advice of the Institute the proportion of the successful to the unsuccessful workers was fifty-fifty, i.e., it was just a matter of even chance whether one made good or failed to do so; while amongst those who accepted the advice of the Institute, the proportion of the successful to the unsuccessful was ninety to ten!

It is, therefore, essential that at this critical stage of our educational development when the educational system is being overhauled with the object of making it more definitely vocational, we

should not be betrayed into a haphazard policy guided solely by an unintelligent reaction against the existing scheme. The object of general as well as vocational education is to produce individuals who will lead useful, satisfied, well-adjusted and 'abundant' lives in their special environment. If vocational education does not take into account the special aptitudes and inclinations of the workers, if it continues to fit square pegs into round holes, if it is dominated solely by the narrowly conceived idea of economic efficiency and not by the idea of 'human salvage' it will neither secure individual happiness nor promote that efficiency which is its conscious object. Carlyle has expressed with his characteristic force, the true function of properly chosen work in the life of men and women, stressing the fact that whole-hearted absorption in a congenial pursuit is the highest bliss available to man. "All true work is sacred. In all true work, were it but true hand labour, there is something of divineness. . . . The latest gospel in the world is 'Know thy work and do it' Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness." 'True' work here implies work that is both congenial to the individual, inasmuch as he can

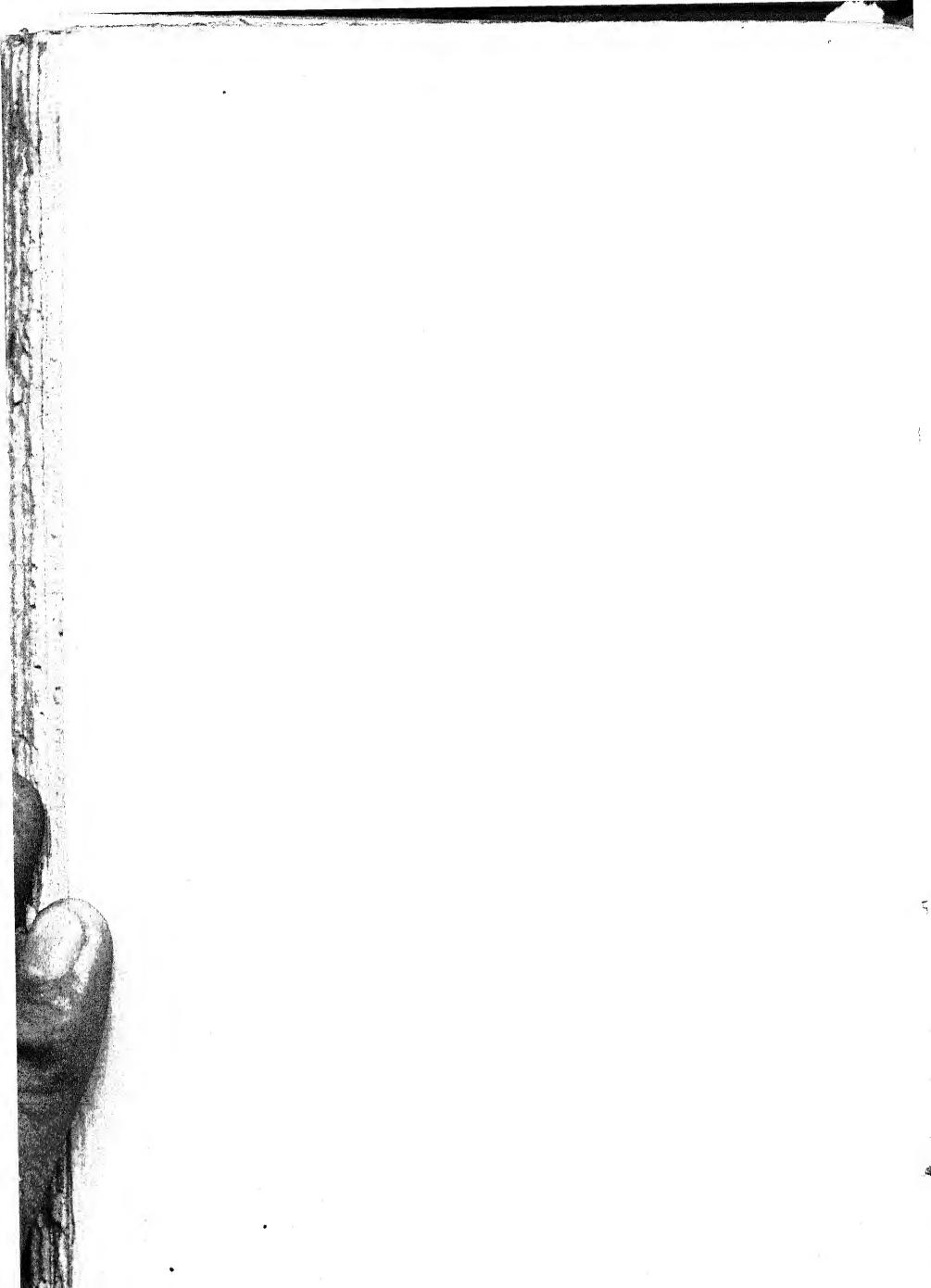
find self-expression through it, and also socially worthy and useful.

With the second factor on which vocational guidance depends, i.e., a survey of available resources in industries, crafts and other occupations, we cannot deal here adequately. But it is obvious that the problem cannot be solved with reference to one pole of the process only: the individual child and his aptitudes. It must take into account the needs of the locality and the likely openings for the workers in the near future. For this purpose regional surveys of vocational requirements will be necessary, carried out by local institutes of vocational guidance which will collate the various factors together before offering their expert and sympathetic advice to the entrants into various vocations. Perhaps, in course of time, school authorities and education departments will acquire sufficient courage and insight to overcome their timid or cynical hesitation and provide part-time "careers masters" for schools whose business it will be to supply data to the Central Institutes and work under their guidance in their respective school systems. Then there will be some hope of redeeming our schooled generations from unemployment and blind-alley occupations,

and of bringing into their life true happiness which is the offspring of congenial, whole-hearted activity.

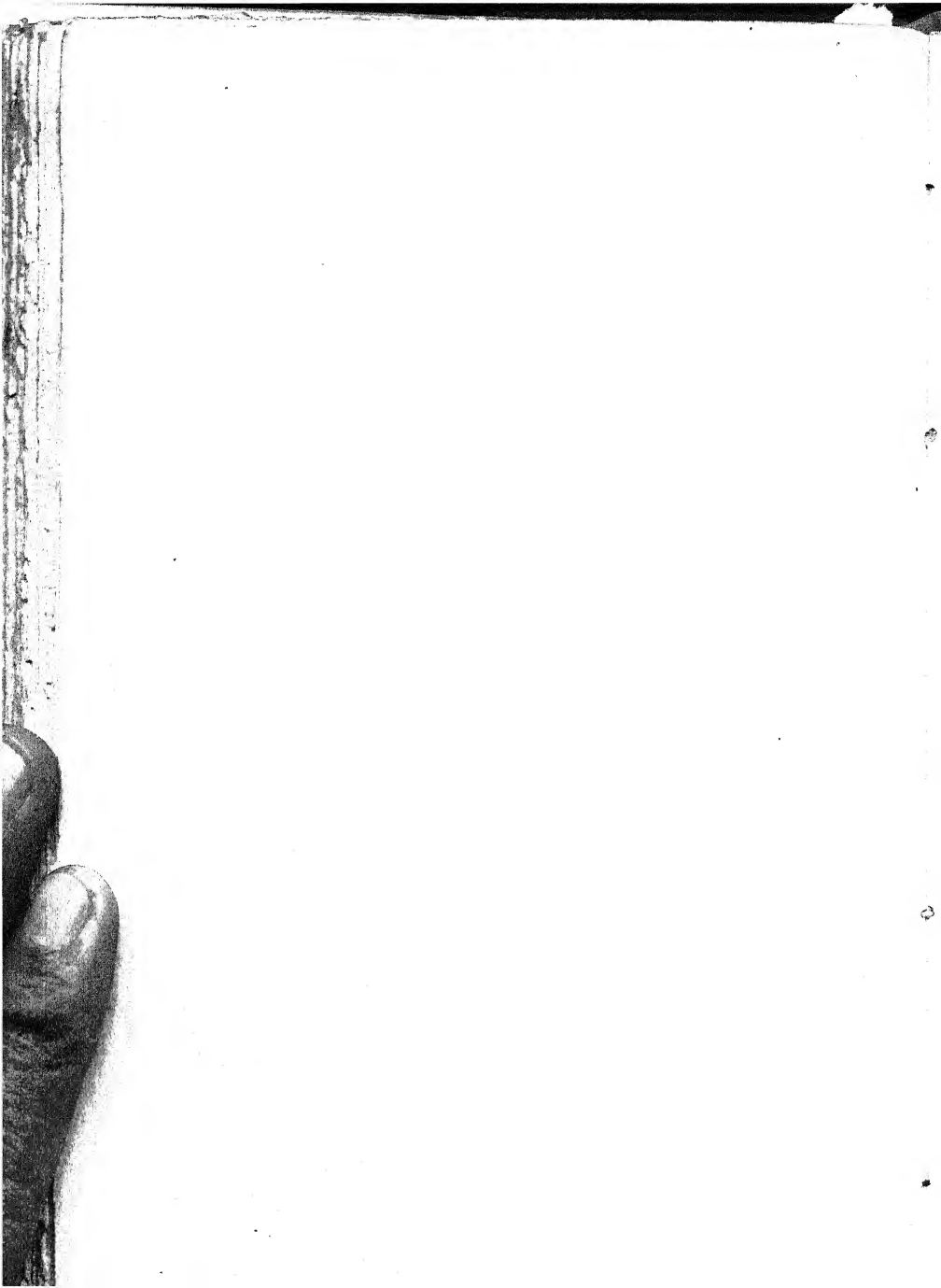
This survey of education dedicated to bringing happiness into the distorted and discontented life of modern men and women—the latter's *distinctive* problems have not been discussed here—has taken us far afield. But such interconnections are of the essence of educational questions which deal with the organic human personality on which numerous influences play from all directions. The education then that we advocate, that we should strive for, is one that will create healthy interests of work and leisure and link up the life of the individual with great and worthy purposes which transcend his own ego and bring him into unison with the larger life of mankind; it is an education that will banish fear as a normal attitude of mind and thus eradicate, so far as possible, the repressions and emotional conflicts which social coercion, in its various forms, engenders; it will be an education which, in close and well-meaning co-operation with a humanized industrial system—how difficult and distant that consummation appears to be!—will train each individual for some line of work that is congenial

to his nature and in which all his distinctive powers and aptitudes will find full play and satisfaction. Such an education alone can bring true happiness into the life of our generation and act as a bulwark against the cheap distractions and indulgences which pass for happiness with the majority of uncultured people, whose minds and spirits have not been awakened and attuned to any higher possibilities. It is the business of the 'school of the future' backed up by the institutions of higher education, to work for the translation of this ideal into practice.



PART II

ASPECTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION



CHAPTER VII

THE RELEASE OF THE CREATIVE IMPULSE

India is faced, at the present juncture of its history, with tremendous problems of national reconstruction. These problems—social, political, economic, and cultural—are individually very important. But in dealing with them there is always the danger which besets people who handle fragmentary phases of a situation—the danger, that is, of losing sight of the wood for the trees. It is significant for the workers in various fields to realize that there is a certain unifying principle which should animate their diverse activities—the principle of what may be called the ‘*Release of the Creative Impulse*’ in the men and women of the country. Under the influence partly of our economic conditions, and partly of the currents of western thought, we are likely to forget that the highest things in life are not the concerns of the flesh and the body and that man does not live by bread alone. It is certainly our desire to secure efficiency and bring happiness within the

reach of every individual, but happiness does not consist in the possession of a great quantity of goods, nor is efficiency to be measured by the speed with which we are able to turn them out. True happiness is the feeling of harmony between the self and its environment—the inner environment of capacities and feelings and the outer environment of human and physical factors—and he alone is “efficient,” i.e., makes a good job of his life, who finds in his work and vocation a happy expression of his powers. This point of view demands a recovery of our faith in Man as the central figure in all our efforts and a realization that the highest and truest meaning of life is to be found in the pursuit of spiritual values. It is a matter of personal faith with me that this can only be achieved if we try to awaken and release the *Creative Impulse* in the men and women, the children and adolescents of our country, and its free expression, individually and nationally, is made the inspiration of our education. This chapter has been written with the conviction that this Creative Impulse is present in every individual and it is the duty of all thinkers, all educationists, to devise ways and means of releasing it for unfettered expression.

I

Before proceeding to discuss the *Release* of the Creative Impulse, it is necessary for us to appreciate and recognize the significant and central rôle which the Creative Impulse has played in the evolution of human life and institutions. This involves a little excursion into the province of Evolution which I am but ill fitted to undertake and in connection with which I do not propose to raise any technical problems which I am not competent to discuss. The Theory of Evolution, as developed by Darwin and others, exercised a very profound influence on the development of human thought and the philosophy of human life. Before this great revolution came about, the most prominent streaks of thought in European philosophy had come from the movement of German idealism. Its literature, its philosophy, its poetry—which is the highest expression of both literature and philosophy—took what might be called an idealistic and spiritual view of life. It was based on the conviction of the infinite dignity of Man and was so preoccupied with fostering it that Nature, in the words of Eucken,* “came to

* Eucken, *Problem of Human Life*.

be regarded merely as a background." Man was the centre of the world-stage, which, in its turn, was the centre of the Universe, and man's part in the drama of life was infinitely significant and spiritual. He was conceived as the master of creation, different in kind from all other creatures, living in a world designed specially for his use.

This self-complacent attitude has, however, been challenged by the rapid and remarkable progress of Science during the last two hundred years and it has brought home to us ever so keenly the sense of human insignificance in the wide Universe. "Never," says Adler,* "has the Lilliputian disparity between man and the magnitude of his world, the immensities of space, come home with such crushing force as it has in our generation." As the advance of scientific knowledge reveals to us the infinities of time and space, as with every improved telescope new worlds swim into our ken, and the panorama of the history of the Universe is unfolded to our imagination, our little span of life and the small world

* Adler, *Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal*.

in which we live seem to dwindle into insignificance.

This was the attack of the physical and mathematical sciences directed at the "quantitative significance," so to speak, of our life. A more alarming attack came from the side of the biological sciences which challenged the quality and the presumed uniqueness of human destiny in the scheme of the Universe. The growth of realism and the development of the Theory of Evolution struck at the root of the spiritual view of the Universe cherished by the idealists. The whole system of relationships between Man and Nature was viewed in a different light. The old religious idea of development, which regarded the whole world as "the unfolding or unwrapping of the Divine Unity, as the temporal manifestation of the Eternal Being,"* could not be harmonized with the facts which had been revealed about the Evolution of the species. Nor was it possible to hold in peace the artistic conception of the world which regarded it as ever-growing from within and attaining to more perfect self-expression, and which had, in the hands of Göethe and his

* Eucken, *Problem of Human Life*.

contemporaries, invested the world with an invisible setting of spiritual forces. The new theory attributed the progress of the world and the origin and growth of man—in fact, the whole development of organic life—to ‘the clash of elemental forces.’ It eliminated the operation of any self-conscious purpose and took what must, in the ultimate analysis, be regarded as a mechanistic view of life, in which human will could play no decisive part. The world was conceived of as a place full of constant struggle for existence amongst all the created forms of life, in which species were tossed up and down and devoured according to some inexorable law. Progress was ascribed to the perpetuation of such chance variations as favoured survival and human life was looked upon as shaped entirely by forces over which man had no control. The general scientific attitude of the period is summed up by Adler rather cynically when he asks, “Is there any valid reason for supposing that we are more worth while than our predecessors—insects, serpents, sheep and oxen, the carnivoræ. We do not claim for them any exalted position in the scheme of things. They are products of Nature; so are we. They have their noxious or kindly

traits; so have we. They are waves of the flux; so are we. All our higher faculties, our mentality and our morality are but the development of instincts latent at the bottom of the scale of life; the highest out-reachings and aspirations we cherish, so we are told, are to be explained as out-croppings from below, no longer as apprehension of what is supremely above.”*

I have made this incursion into the domain of Science, with the due hesitation of a layman, in order to point out that a conception of life and Universe which denies spirituality to the Universe, creativity to man and freedom to life strikes at the very root of human ideals and achievements. We cannot achieve anything great or valuable in our life, either individually or collectively, if we subscribe to this undiluted view of Evolution. If life were to be conceived of as an intricate complex of physical and chemical relations, how can we explain the emergence of those higher qualities in man which distinguish him from all other creatures—the æsthetic, the moral and the intellectual? We shall be reduced to the position of regarding them, with James, as having no

* Adler, *Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal*.

“biological utility” and look upon Art, with Herbert Spencer, as an “epiphenomenon,” which has no significance in relation to the real business of life.

Luckily, later developments in thought have modified and corrected this undiluted Evolution and Bergson and his school have given expression to the pregnant conception of Creative Evolution which has a direct bearing on our immediate problem. Bergson holds that Evolution is neither a fixed nor a predetermined product. It is essentially and unceasingly creative. The Universe is not a ‘completed system of reality,’ not a ‘being,’ but a constant ‘becoming.’ There is a tremendous urge pulsating throughout the Universe, working along different lines of evolution, finding itself here and there in blind alleys, but because of its intrinsically creative nature, it is always overcoming obstacles of automatism, till in *man* it has achieved its highest known triumph. In Bergson’s own picturesque and beautiful words,* “From one point of view, life appears in its entirety, as an immense wave which, starting from a centre, spreads outward and which,

* *Creative Evolution.*

on the whole of its circumference, is stopped and converted into oscillations. At one single point, the obstacle has been forced—the impulsion has passed freely. It is this freedom which the human form registers.” Elsewhere, he refers to the triumph of the creative spirit in the case of man in these words: “Our brain, our society and our language are only the external and various signs of the same internal superiority. They tell, each in its own manner, the unique exceptional success which life has won at a given moment of its evolution.... They let us guess that while at the end of the vast spring-board, from which life has taken its leap, all the others have stepped down, finding the chord stretched too high, man alone has cleared the obstacle.”*

Thus, as we all realize in our own personal experience, not only does man grow like plants and move like animals and share their instincts and emotions but the impetus of life, ever pushing, ever springing forward, has also evolved for him the power of the intellect and the gift of intuition and the capacity to roam free and unchecked in the regions of thought and imagina-

* *Creative Evolution.*

tion. Through the invention of motor mechanisms and the development of social life and language, he has immensely multiplied the scope of his creative activity and increased his sphere of freedom. Instinctive activity rose to a higher plane of endeavour when developed human intellect began to take a hand in the guidance of human conduct. "Instead of allowing a full paradise of perfection to continue its tame and timid rule of faultless regularity," says Tagore,* "the spirit of Life boldly declared for a further freedom and decided to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.... She took a bold step in throwing open her gates to a dangerously explosive factor which she had incautiously introduced into her council—the element of Mind." The view of life which Bergson has developed in his epoch-making work, shows that its creative forces are ever making for more freedom and variety and tending to overcome the opposing forces of automatism. Evolution there certainly is—but it is not blind; it is purposive, tending to work out an ever more progressive and perfect type of life.

What then if mathematically the earth is an

* *Religion of Man* (Hibbert Lectures, 1930).

infinitesimal speck of space and man's life an infinitesimal moment of time? Through his power of creation, man emerges as a conqueror placed above the limitations of space and time and a co-worker with God in shaping the Universe and his own life into a thing of power and beauty. And in this creativity lies embedded the precious possibility of the development of a more perfect type of manhood. In the ultimate triumph of the Creative Evolution and the emergence of this freer and more perfect type, Dr. Iqbal has again and again expressed his faith. I cannot do better than quote a few of his beautiful verses* :—

مشو نومید زین مشیت غبارے
 پریشان جلوۂ ناپائیدارے -
 چون فطرت می ترا شد پیکرے را
 تمامش میکند در روزگارے -

Do not despair of this handful of dust;
 This light so distracted, so transitory;
 When Nature fashions certain forms,
 She brings them to perfection in the cycle
 of Time.

پیام مشرق *

And again:—

گمان صبر کہ بہ پایان رسید کار مغان
ہزار بادۂ ناخوردہ در رگ تاک است -

“Do not think that the work of the tavern-keeper has come to its appointed end; in the veins of the vine, there are a thousand untasted, unsuspected wines.”

In another poem, from which I quote a few verses below, he depicts the attitude of the poet in whom creativity and art find their noblest expression, in whom we see a vivid manifestation of the creative nature of human Evolution, its perpetual search after better and more expressive form, its ceaseless quest after beauty:—

چہ کنم کہ فطرت من بہ مقام در فساد
دل نا صبور دارم چو صبابہ لالہ زارے
چون نظر قرار گیرد بنگار خوب روئے
تپد آن زمان دل من پیئے خوبتر نگارے -
ز سر رستارہ جویم رستارہ آفتابے -
سر منزلی ندارم کہ بیموم از قرارے
طلبم نہایت آن کہ نہایتے ندارد
بہ نگاہ ناشکیبے ، بہ دل اُمید وارے -

"What shall I do? My nature does not
 abide in one place,
 I have an inconsolable heart like the breeze
 in a field of poppies.
 Whenever my vision lingers over a lovely
 form,
 The heart yearns for one lovelier still:
 In the spark I look for a star, in the star
 for a sun,
 I have no thought of a goal, for rest spells
 death for me.
 I seek the end of that which is without an
 end,
 With an insatiable eye and a heart full of
 hope."

Thus we see that the essential and distinctive characteristic of human activity is no mechanical repetition of set patterns of conduct, altered occasionally through the fortunate perpetuation of chance variations—it is a capacity for creative action. The creativity which modern thought postulates for the process of evolution is mirrored most clearly in the actions of man. There is in every individual an "*elan vital*," a "vital

urge," which is continually leading him, under normal conditions, to express himself in ways which are individual and unique to him. It is not possible to secure the full development of individuality and its latent capacities unless we allow this vital, creative urge to express itself through suitable channels. In the words of Dr. Nunn, the well-known English educationist "Higher creative life, far from being an accident, is the clearest and purest expression of the essential characteristic of life at all its points and levels. All life, however humdrum, is permeated by the self-same element whose inflorescence is literature, art, philosophy, science and religion." They all represent the triumph and achievement of the creative human spirit, struggling towards more truth, more beauty, more goodness—in short, more light. In this we can see how the arts and sciences which had been denied any "zoological utility" and hence denied any entrance, as it were, into the essential scheme of human life, come into their own as its most significant and distinctive elements. "Does he who create like unto him that does not?" asks the Holy Quran, and the answer is a decided "No." Mankind, as a whole, is superior to other created

forms, in that it has a more highly developed creative impulse and the superiority of one individual over another or of a community over its neighbours is to be measured by the same criterion, *i.e.*, the degree to which the creative impulse of the individual or the community has been released and has succeeded in expressing itself in appropriate forms.

II

Let us turn now to the more practical aspect of the problem. Granted that the creative impulse is a distinctive characteristic and a valuable possession of man, how is it possible to nurture it and release it so that the individual may realize his highest possibilities? Perhaps, before answering this question, it would be better to raise another and briefly answer it. Is it correct, and does it accord with our everyday observation, to imply that this creative impulse is to be found in all individuals? Do we not rather see that there are innumerable men and women who never taste the joy of creative activity, whose life is one unbroken routine of monotonous tasks—in whom the creative impulse does not seem to exist at all? It is true that the majority of people in the world of

today are unluckily denied the opportunities for creative self-expression; but this does not warrant the conclusion that they are denied the gift by Nature. The fault lies mainly with the environment which is so cramped and unfriendly that it denies people the conditions for creative activity even as it denies sound health or humane culture to so many, and thus debars them from rising to their full stature. Again, it is true that every one has not the capacity to become a great painter or a great poet or a great carpenter, but innumerable are the ways in which the creative impulse expresses itself and great are the differences in its intensity and significance amongst different individuals. Except in the case of those in whom some congenital, mental or physical defect has cramped normal development, the creative impulse is the possession of all, not the privilege of a few, and—given the right conditions—it will certainly develop and manifest itself within its own special field and limitations. In one it may take the form of art; in another, of some particular craft; a third may give it expression and find satisfaction in deeds of social service. And who knows but that the seemingly mute individual who is not for the moment

expressing himself in any visible form may be building up creatively a personality of high intrinsic value, for, is not the ultimate reason of human life, as Bergson suggests, "the creation of the self by the self, the continual enrichment of personality by elements which it does not draw from outside but causes to spring from within?"

نہ مٹے از ازل آورد نہ جامے آورد
لالہ از داغ جگر سوزد و امی آورد - * (اقبال)

This سوز و دام this ceaseless quest and creative yearning is given to every individual in a certain measure and the greatest tragedy in life is its suppression by adverse circumstances. The mute, inglorious Miltons, of whom Gray talks wistfully, are really people in whom lack of opportunity has killed the capacity for creative self-expression in the form of poetry. And even if their poetry had not been of any great value to the world, there is no doubt that the release of the poetic impulse would have been a great boon

* "The poppy brings with it neither the sparkling wine nor the cup. It brings only a ceaseless yearning, born of its own infinite suffering."

to their own selves and enriched their personality considerably.

I am deeply convinced that the greatest educational problem before our age is just this release of the creative impulse in individuals as well as in groups, because it is threatened by the modern industrial and machine age which is tending to mechanize life, reducing men to mere appendages of the machines that they operate. In the picturesque words of Tagore,* "Such an intemperate overgrowth of things, like rank vegetation in the tropics, creates confinement for man. The nest is simple; it has an early relationship with the sky; the cage is complex and costly; it is too much itself, excommunicated from whatever lies outside. And man is building his cage, fast developing his parasitism on the monster, Thing, which he allows to envelop him on all sides. He is always occupied in adapting himself to its dead angularities, limits himself to its limitations and merely becomes a part of it."

Against this state of things the best minds of the East and the West are experiencing a sharp reaction and trying to fight the evil effects of this

* *Religion of Man.*

tendency through educational and social reorganization. All the movements associated with what is generally known as the "New Education" in the West are directed at bringing the joy of creative activity within the reach of the ordinary child and the ordinary citizen who, at present, are being literally smothered by their environment.

In India, although the industrialization of life has not proceeded so far as in the West, the history of the last two hundred years is a tragic story of how the creative impulse has been strangled in almost all the activities of national life. Limitations of space do not permit me to go far back into ancient Indian history—rich as the period is in creative masterpieces—but even if we confine ourselves to the Middle Ages and the Mughal Period, we find there evidences of the richest and most fruitful creative activity. Whatever faults we may be inclined to find with them on economic or social grounds, we must look back with admiration, perhaps with envy, to those glorious days when the creative and æsthetic faculties of the people found expression in such masterpieces as the Taj and other architectural triumphs culminating in the reign of Shah Jahan, when artists and craftsmen and architects

could "plan like Titans and finish like jewellers," when their remarkable sense of symmetry and intricate design could produce, on the one hand, the marvellous balance of the minarets of the Delhi mosque and work out, on the other hand, the beautiful and proportioned writings on the Saracenic arches and the inlaid mosaic of precious stones in the Taj. Not only did they achieve great things in architecture, in miniature painting on ivory, in music, in poetry and in other fine arts—the creative spirit sought avenues for itself in all the crafts and industries as well. One can visualize the happy craftsmen achieving creative self-expression in Dacca muslin, in embroidery, in leather, in metals, in ornaments, in gardens, and in all other materials in which they worked. This is not the place to discuss the complicated chain of causes which combined to thwart and suppress this creative expression of national life and killed the flourishing arts and crafts, so typical of the Indian genius. The decline is not confined to the arts and crafts only—it has manifested itself in the literature and literary activities of the people and their intellectual achievements. We hear the general complaint that the standard of intellectual output in India is low, that it has

failed within modern times to contribute its due share to the advancement of science. The reason is that our educational system and our social and political conditions have been militating against the development of the creative capacity of our people. Education is being designedly given with a narrow utilitarian aim, and naturally it fails to challenge and evoke the higher powers whether of artistic creation or intellect or personality. The capacity for intelligent thought, for initiative and ingenuity, for the expression of the unique and the individual self is atrophied for want of use. Similarly the other circumstances which environ our life today have had an adverse reaction. The deprivation of political liberty is not merely a political affair—it has had far-reaching repercussions on all aspects of national activity and has dried up the springs of creative energy. A nation that is not free to develop its life and institutions in the light of its own special genius, cannot rise to its full intellectual and moral stature, because it lacks that atmosphere of freedom and conscious responsibility which is an essential condition for all growth. It is no exaggeration to say that a great deal of

spiritual unrest and unhappiness that we see in India today, as also in many other countries, is due to the blocking up of the creative impulse as a result of this conjunction of adverse circumstances. Whenever an individual or a nation is bowed down with the oppressive feeling that it cannot give free expression to, or utilize the best of its powers and aspirations, the result is a feeling of spiritual suffocation. There is, of course, such a thing as 'possessive' happiness which arises at a lower stage of individual and national development. To this some people may cling with a pathetic tenacity and find in it their merited satisfaction. But men with a higher vision and understanding outgrow it and pass it by and seek their self-realization in the pursuit of that greater thing which Bertrand Russell* calls "creative happiness," with its element of quest, of danger, of joyous adventure. It is the aim and endeavour of all true education to enrich human life by making individuals seek this true creative happiness.

III

"The urge to create is one with the urge for self-expression. . . It is the impelling desire to

* *On Education.*

translate an experience, a fleeting inner image into an outward form, to leave a significant personal impress upon material, to convey a feeling or refine a feeling that has been lived before only in imagination The criterion of the creative act is that it shall be the artist's own original and completely integrated portrayal of what is in his own imagination."

Thus writes Professor Harold Rugg, an American educationist, in a book* of considerable interest on the *New Education*, and my purpose now is to examine under what conditions this creative activity, typical of the artist but available in a greater or lesser measure to all, is nourished and favoured.

It is a matter of common knowledge and experience that creation cannot be forced. It is only when the springs of creative activity have been released from *within* that the spirit of the artist or the craftsman, struggling to express itself in obedience to the demands of his inner nature, seeks for material and external outlets and submits itself cheerfully to the restraints of form or technique. But this release from within can

* Rugg and Schumaker: *Child-Centred School*.

only come when the individual is living in an environment rich in experiences and is storing up his impressions and emotions to weave the texture of his inner life. Precious liquid may flow only out of a full vessel; an empty vessel has nothing to give. If the individual opens his mind and heart to the things around him and lets the outside world feed his soul, he gathers up abundant material for his own growth and he can use it for the exercise of his own creative power. A German youth is reported to have asked that great artist, Göethe, "How did you begin to write in such a beautiful style?" Göethe replied, compressing his valuable experience into half a dozen words, "I let things work upon me." What is true of Göethe in this respect is true also of every child and every student who is a potential artist. In the zealous advocacy of 'activity' in the new schools there is certainly the danger of rushing and over-doing things, of not letting life and experience work slowly and silently on the scholars. "Conceivably," says Alexander,* discussing this reply of Göethe, "an individual may

* Alexander and Parker, *The New Education in the German Republic*.

be so continually and zealously active that he never 'lets things work' upon him. According to this interpretation, educational activity must not be thought of as 'active' in the obvious sense only. Educative activity may be going on just as truly in the youth who lies on a green hill in the spring sunlight lost in day-dreams as in the pupil busy with his school task." Creative activity postulates an environment rich in stimuli for self-expression, leading to interested observation and the translation of a full and happy life of emotions and experiences into visible forms. A child or an adult, living in a poor, barren environment, whether in the school or at home, where the beauty and splendour of natural phenomena, the give and take of social life, the cultural influence of books and pictures and contact with the great minds of the past and the present, are wanting—such an individual will have hardly anything worth while in him to express. Nor will a nation or community which has not passed through a travail of the spirit and been brought into quickening contact with free institutions burst forth into beautiful poetry or art or music. From the educational point of view, therefore, the central problem is to ensure that a free, creative spirit

permeates and penetrates all phases of school life. We should also bear in mind that this creative spirit cannot feed on anything except those strains or currents which embody the most genuine national traditions of culture—currents which, in the words of Professor Nunn,* “are richest in the creative element and themselves represent traditions of activity—practical, intellectual, æsthetic, moral—with a high degree of individuality and continuity and mark out the main lines in the development of the human spirit—national poetry, music, art, architecture, science and philosophy.” Education is certainly a “conversation with the world,” but, according to him, it must be carried out in the ‘native idiom.’ Poor, indeed, intellectually are the people who depend on a foreign language for their self-expression and poor are the chances of any release of their creative impulse. Not that the mastery of a foreign language is an asset to be despised; but, if it takes the place of an intimate understanding and use of the mother tongue, it is a tragic handicap. The development of the folk

* *The Education of the People*: An Address to the British Association.

spirit, which has always accompanied every great cultural renaissance, demands that our education should nurture in the people a deep and abiding love of our language, our literature, our art. For, do they not represent "the great movements of the human spirit, the major forms in which the creative impulses of men have been shaped and disciplined?"* If the theory of the school curriculum and activities underlying this idea is accepted, how poor and barren is the intellectual and cultural sustenance which we provide for the children in our schools, feeding them on husks?

To illustrate what I mean by the value of a rich environment and genuine personal experience lying at the back of all creative self-expression, I take writing as an example. Ordinarily, the routine-blind teacher regards it as a formal skill to be acquired through "disciplinary" technique. It is not for the child a dearly welcome opportunity to express himself about things he has done or seen or admired, not a sharing—through the written word—of rich, vital experiences whose communication seems worth while to him. It is rather a soul-killing practice at the

* *Ibid.*

“mechanics of penmanship, correct usage of grammatical forms, punctuation, sentence structure and paragraphing,” because on some distant future day these things will be needed by him as a scribe! It is the technique that unfortunately dominates the release of the creative vision—the “pruning hook” is employed more frequently than the “watering pot,” and employed far too early. The result is an early, unconscious inhibition against naturalness and spontaneity in writing. Professor Rugg, to whose book I have already referred, says, “Unless the child has had freedom to think independently, to say what is in his thoughts, he is not likely to be transformed into a self-impelling creative individual when confronted by sheets of paper and a pencil. For, writing is thinking on paper and thinking is forming associations between previously unrelated experiences. In an atmosphere requiring conformity and submission, experience is limited to set patterns. Original thinking is discouraged; self-confidence is sacrificed to the need for following directions.”

The result of school work carried out under these conditions is only too familiar to us. Neither the students in schools, nor a large major-

ity of the "educated" people acquire ordinary facility of expression—to say nothing of felicity or beautiful effects which one may reasonably expect of people who have been learning and practising the art for years. The early emphasis on the formal and mechanical aspect and the barrenness of their daily life, which cannot possibly stimulate self-expression, kill all impulse to creation, and the child, with the delightful and expressive prattle, so akin to poetry, develops into the tongue-tied youth and ends as the adult with a harsh uncouth style of speech and writing. The same thing applies to reading and the appreciation of beautiful writing. The child craves for beautiful sound effects and words which would conjure up images pregnant with beauty, because these have an intuitive appeal for him. Instead we keep him for years on uninteresting, often ugly *Readers* through which he painfully spells his way, without coming into contact with really beautiful literature and the masterpieces of great writers. Tagore gives us a very interesting reminiscence of his early age to illustrate this point. "I still remember," says he,*

* *Religion of Man* (Hibbert Lectures, 1930).

"the day in my childhood when I was made to struggle across my lesson in a first primer, strewn with isolated words smothered under the burden of spelling. The morning hour appeared to me like a once illumined page, grown dusty and faded, discoloured into irrelevant marks, smudges and gaps, wearisome in its moth-eaten meaninglessness. Suddenly I came to a rhymed sentence of combined words which may be translated thus, 'It rains, the leaves tremble.' At once I came to a world wherein I recovered my full meaning. My mind touched the creative realm of expression and at the moment I was no longer a mere student with his mind muffled by spelling lessons, enclosed by class-rooms. The rhythmic picture of the tremulous leaves beaten by the rain opened before my mind the world which does not merely convey information but a harmony with my being."

It will be idle to pretend that a chance phrase like this will arouse in every child the same depth of appreciation as it stirred in the poet-to-be. But, wherever, under the impetus of the *New Education*, an attempt has been made to enrich the life of children with vital experiences gathered in freedom and joy, the result has been a

deeper appreciation of beauty and its creative expression in one form or another. Some schools have revealed in their children a gift of poetic talent which the formal schoolmaster finds hard to believe. And even more significant than the intrinsic merit of the poetry and prose produced by fairly young students is the influence which this release of creative effort has exercised on the unfolding of their personalities and in tapping the latent reserves of artistic emotions and appreciation. The process involved is more important than the products of their creative activity, because it leaves an abiding impress on their mental and emotional disposition. Some years ago, in the University school at Aligarh, an experiment was tried in creative writing with boys of the 7th class, giving them freedom in the choice of their topics and the method of treatment and providing no help beyond reading out a composition of the type proposed to them, i.e., writing out the autobiography of any selected subject without revealing its name. The "essays" turned out (in Urdu) were a revelation to me of what is possible for young boys in the way of picturesque description and humorous treatment—boys who normally sat sucking their pens when asked to write the

formal "essays" of the class-room. A study of these boys' compositions would show how, under proper conditions, the creative impulse that has been lying dormant will easily express itself. In the English, American and European schools, wherever the teaching of the mother tongue has been entrusted to some teacher of vision and insight, school poetry of a fairly high order has been turned out. I quote at the end of this chapter one such poem given by Ernest Young in his delightful book *The New Era in Education* as an illustration of what he calls "Transmutation"—the intimate correlation of poetry, music and painting. It is but one instance out of many that have been published within recent years. In poems like these, important because of the promise that they hold out, because they renew our faith in the creativity of the human mind, we can sense the triumph of the creative evolution over the forces which are tending to mechanize life. The schools can surely have no higher purpose in this direction than to foster with love and care this flickering art-impulse in every individual, so that the higher forces of creation may have a chance to survive in this mechanical and industrial age.

IV

A free, healthy environment, rich in experiences and activity, being provided, our next problem is to inquire: How does the creative impulse, emerging in its nebulous, indefinite form, pass through the various successive stages towards completion and become the vehicle of self-expression? It is a big and difficult question to answer and I feel considerable hesitation in saying anything dogmatic because of the lack of personal experience of any artistic production in the ordinary sense. An outsider who presumes to analyse the growth of the creative impulse, should always do so with a sense of diffidence and subject to the criticism and correction of those who, as artists, have themselves known and experienced what he is trying to discuss. By way of a starting point, I cannot do better than discuss the psychology of the creative act as given by Professor Rugg,* who gives the various connected steps of the creative process as follows:—

- (1) There is, to begin with, the urge to create—hazy and intangible at first,

* Child-Centred School.

often manifesting itself as a vague restlessness.

- (2) Then there is the illuminating flash of insight, the intuition which suddenly reveals to the artist a conception, perhaps indefinite, of the meaning towards which he is groping.
- (3) Thirdly, the translation of this vision into the visible symbols of the art practised—it may be poetry, painting, music or anything else—which requires a mastery of the necessary technique.
- (4) Then comes the educative effort, “the long, gruelling enterprise of the creative process itself, the tenacious grip on the clearing vision of the completed product, the persistent application of the necessary techniques in shaping and reshaping the work as it develops; the successive stages of ruthless self-criticism . . . the insistence upon unsparing exactitude, precision, the constant polishing and changing . . .”
- (5) Finally, when the whole process has been completed and culminates in beautiful expression, it gives a sense of

achievement and of joy which, according to Bergson, "is the seal which nature sets on every completed, creative act."

Let us examine these steps in the creative process. It is true that the urge to create, in its intense and unmixed form, is felt only by the born artist who expresses himself even when hemmed in by adverse circumstances. But, as I have already said, every normal individual has the creative impulse to a smaller or greater degree, and infinite are the forms in which it may express itself and find satisfaction. For these people the expression of the creative impulse is greatly facilitated by a rich environment saturated with the highest values of national tradition and culture. A school—or a University—is a vital and life-giving environment to the extent that it brings into the life of its students an abiding love and appreciation for all that is best and most significant in national life and beyond. Then alone will it give rise to that 'vague restlessness,' that 'desire to create' which is the motive force of all our great and spontaneous achievements. This is not a plea for a luxurious environment but for one that will provoke,

challenge and inspire varied activity through the stimuli which it provides. Nothing can educate the creative impulse better than putting the children—or, for the matter of that, grown-up people—into vital *rapport* with such an environment and then letting them interact freely in an atmosphere of freedom and spontaneity. For, is not the creative “release” rather the release of the “imprisoned splendour” within than putting something in from without? Everything that tends to stereotype and mould activity into set patterns hinders growth and creation and limits our free activity. Freedom may be a moot-point in philosophy but from our point of view we are essentially free when ‘our acts spring from our whole personality, when they express that personality.’

Of the inner vision or intuition of the artist, a great deal could be said, but I shall confine myself to one point only. Intuitive insight is not confined to the great mystics alone, as was generally the belief in the past; nor is it the exclusive gift of the artist and the poet as is the general belief to-day. It is an attribute of all, little exploited it is true, but capable of being exploited very considerably, and present markedly in children who, in many ways, resemble the

artist and often perceive things intuitively long before they can grasp them intellectually. How does this intuitive flash come to the artist—the flash of insight that reveals, as with a blinding blaze of light, a truth or a form or a course of action towards which he has been groping? It is a problem so little explored—and by its nature so difficult to explore—that no definite answer can be given. But it is certainly a fact that it requires a sympathetic contact with Nature, an entering into the life of things by an identification of the Self with what is sought. It is not a comprehension of phenomena in the cold, clear light of reason and intellectual analysis but an apprehension in which love and sympathy and emotional appreciation play their part. In the words of Iqbal once again:

تا پر تو آشکار شود راز زندگی
خود را جدا ز شعله مثال شرر مکن
بهر نظاره جز نگه آشنا میار
در مرز بوم خود چو غریبان گذر مکن

“Wilt thou learn the secret of life? Then sever thyself not from the flame like the evanescent spark. Bring not to the service of thy vision

aught but a discerning eye—live not like a stranger in the world that environs thee.”

There are circumstances in modern life which make the functioning of intuition very difficult and scarce. Intuitive activity is born in an atmosphere which permits of leisure and quiet which is not dominated by that rush and hurry, that mad chase after doing things and amusing oneself which preclude communion with the Self and with Nature and do not allow one the benefits of silence and contemplation. I do not mean that intuition comes only to those who lead a life of contemplation, divorced from action, but I do believe that in schools, as in the world outside, no one should be deprived of occasional chances to come face to face, as it were, with one's own self. One great virtue of the ancient educational systems in India as well as in some other countries, was its comparative leisureliness, its desire to bring the students into intimate and peaceful contact with Nature and to afford them time for self-contemplation that they may feel they have an inner life, too. Such leisure is helpful to creation. Discussing its value for creative activity, Tagore says, “But above the din and scramble, rises the voice of the angel of surplus, of

leisure, of detachment from the compelling claim of physical need, saying to men 'Rejoice.' From his original serfdom as a creature, Man takes his rightful seat as a creator; whereas before, his incessant appeal has been to *get*, now at last the call comes to him to *give* As an animal he is still dependent on Nature; as a Man he is a sovereign who builds his world and rules it."*

On the place of technique in the working of the creative impulse there is a clear cleavage of opinion between the older and modern views. The older school of thought which practically included all the disciplinarians believed in the introduction of technique as early as possible. In fact they often tried to give children, in ordinary as well as in art schools, a mastery of technical tools and processes before giving them any chance to come face to face with the inspiration of a creative conception. We, on the other hand, believe that technique is not some kind of formal skill which can be acquired through formal exercises—it is rather the form which the creative impulse imposes on itself to gain greater expressiveness. It frees the child as well as the artist

* *Religion of Man.*

for greater effort and brings his work into line and relationship with that of others and gives him an ever-increasing sense of achievement. It is essential, therefore, that in the early stage of art teaching—and here I am using ‘art’ in the widest sense, including writing and drawing—we should first let children express themselves unhindered and, when the springs of creative energy have been released, we can begin to think of ways and means of directing this energy into disciplined and technical forms. Too early an insistence on technique, say in writing, will produce only that formal and artificial style of expression which has been so evident, for example, in the writings of our students and will tend to curb sincerity and naturalness which are the hallmarks of genuine creative products.

The “long educative effort” which requires great persistence and ruthless self-criticism is essential, because, without it, the artist can never improve and rise to the full height of his possibilities. Many aspiring artists and gifted children fail to bend and harness their energies and will power to the task in hand and hence fail to fulfil their promise. But if genuine interest has been awakened and command over technique is progres-

sively acquired, the imperious call to create and carry the activity to its natural end will keep the budding artist absorbed in his work and compel him to spurn temptations and distractions. For the path of the artist, whether in the school or outside, is not the primrose path of pleasure and relaxation—it demands his loyal and undivided devotion and effort which it is the business of schools assiduously to foster. The joy that creative activity yields is not that of mere amusement; it is rather the joy of strenuous effort, of obstacles faced and overcome and of the spirit of adventure and enterprise expressing itself in the reduction of obstinate matter to beautiful form.

A few words on one last aspect of creative activity which is within the power of most individuals—*Appreciation*. The word recalls to my mind a motto which I saw prominently displayed in the Art Room of a progressive English school. It said, "No appreciation without creation." This motto sums up very tersely and truly the most fundamental principle of *Appreciation*. It is wrong to imagine that *Appreciation* is a passive process. It is really an active and richly creative process. Critical appreciation is really as much

a creative art as poetry or music, because no one can truly evaluate and genuinely enjoy a beautiful poem or a masterpiece of painting or sculpture unless, by his sympathetic imagination and the creative activity of his mind and feelings, he can enter into the life of the subject and identify himself with the mental and emotional states of the artist. Appreciation of the beautiful—in art and literature and life generally—is one of the purest and highest sources of pleasure and it has to be definitely and progressively cultivated. It is one of the major tragedies of our education that it sends out students who hold degrees and who may also possess a hazy memory of many disjointed facts but the gift of creative appreciation of beauty is denied to them. Not for them is “a thing of beauty a joy for ever.” In the pilgrimage of life they may come across many such things but they pass them by with closed eyes. Contact with the best that has been thought and felt by the great men of the past and transmuted into beautiful forms of art, progressive refinement of taste and standards of judgment and, at the same time, a scrupulous avoidance of external imposition of values—all these are necessary for the cultivation of true appreciation.

Really great art makes its own appeal direct to the child as to the adult; teachers should not, therefore, allow their own personality to loom too large and interrupt the child's vision of beauty and his intuitive appreciation of what is of æsthetic value in it. For, it is really this power of intuitive sympathy which is at the basis of both creation and appreciation. What is it, asks Wildon Carr, that we call genius in great painters and poets and musicians, and goes on to say, "It is the power they have of seeing more than we see and of enabling us by their expression to penetrate further into reality. What they see is there to be seen, but they alone see it because they are gifted with a higher power than we It is the power to enter by sympathy into their subject. Great art is inspiration; it is the artist's power of knowing by entering within the object and living its life. What makes the artist's picture? Not the colours which he mixes on his palette and transfers to his canvas—these are only his means of expression—not the model which sits to give him direction in his composition, nor the skill with which he portrays the reality in his representation. What makes the picture is the artist's vision, his entry into the

very life of his subject by sympathy”* It is this sympathetic intuition, the privilege of the artist, which we have to develop in the students of our schools through the provision of a proper environment.

Let me sum up briefly the argument of this article. I have tried to explain that the entire process of Evolution is a creative process, that everything which strengthens and encourages this creative element in the life of the individual not only furthers the process of Evolution but also gives us that richness and fullness of life without which human existence will fall far below its highest standard. The release of this creative impulse is important alike for individuals and communities, for without such release they are both likely to suffer from a sense of spiritual uneasiness and of the atrophy of latent powers. It requires for its expression an environment in which freedom and joy and spontaneity prevail and there is room for leisure and silence and intimate contact with Nature. We must try and look upon life itself as a work of art which has to be shaped by the individual under conditions

* *Bergson and his Philosophy.*

which, on a superficial and piecemeal view, may appear those of restraint and determination but really permit autonomy to the individual to weave the texture of his life by his own free and creative activity on the basis of the raw materials he gets from Nature and the training which is imparted to him by the cultural influence of his environment. There can, in my opinion, be no greater objective than this that the individual may try to realize in his life the integral unity, the expressiveness, the triumphant freedom and balance which characterize great works of art. In the light of what I have discussed above, it should be clear that this objective can be best attained through the Release of the Creative Impulse.

APPENDIX

The following poem quoted by Young in "*New Era in Education*" was composed by a boy, eighteen years old, when he was a student of a progressive school in England, where the teacher of English literature had a living faith in the possibility of releasing the creative impulses of youth. The poem is inspired by Roger Quilter's *A Study* and gives creatively the impres-

sion made on him by listening to that musical theme.

At the top of waving trees
Swaying gentle as a bird,
Was born the sweetest little breeze
That ever stirred—
That ever was heard.

Rhythm nursed this baby breeze,
Whose woes and joys were harmonies,
Whose youth was full of melodies—
All sung to please
The God of Trees.

Passion one day tore the breeze,
Filled it with emotion strong;
Almost tore it from the trees
And for long
Filled its song.

While the passion rocked the breeze,
Rhythm ruled its wild endeavour,
To escape the guardian trees
And to sever
Them for ever.

The cry uplifted by the breeze,
Full of passionate despair,
Reached at last the God of Trees
Who then and there
Answered the prayer.

Rest was granted to the breeze,
The Passion died in bearing Peace,
And in the tall, caressing trees
Praise for release
Did never cease.

Then death claimed the sweet-voiced breeze
Who, in sunset's dying rays,
Thus comforted the sighing breeze:
"Henceforth," God says,
"Silence is Praise!"

CHAPTER VIII

THE SPIRIT OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

DURING the last few years there has been a good deal of vocal and written criticism of Indian Universities, and prominent public men who have made their mark in their respective walks of life, have given us the benefit of their views on the functions of University Education in India. It has occasioned me no little surprise to see that there is such a general and widespread confusion of thought on some of the most vital educational issues and Universities have been subjected to adverse criticism, not on really valid grounds, but on grounds that will certainly not stand intelligent analysis. I am no apologist for the Indian Universities as they are. On the contrary, I am keenly alive to their manifold defects and shortcomings and I realize that their academic standards are unfortunately very far from what they might be. But this does not justify a confusion of issues or excuse the tendency on the

part of educated people to attack the Universities on every conceivable individual grievance. In practical and political life, any stick may be good enough to beat a dog with; but, in intellectual matters, we must insist on a clarity of thought, on a careful and honest formulation of standards and criteria of judgment. It is my purpose in this paper to discuss briefly the charges which are usually levelled against the Universities and, incidentally, to indicate what I consider to be the true function of a University in modern life. I do not propose to offer here my own criticism of the features that are objectionable in our University education but rather to examine the criticisms popularly advanced.

Perhaps the most common complaint that one always encounters is that the Universities do not contribute to the vocational efficiency of their alumni; they do not cure unemployment; they concentrate on 'useless' or 'unimportant' knowledge instead of equipping young men to earn their living. There are historical, as well as contemporary, reasons for the particular stress implicit in this view. Indian Universities came into being principally for the purpose of teaching English language and, to a

lesser extent, western knowledge to Indians with a view mainly to producing government officials, and, so long as the number of graduates was not very large and competition not very keen, the Universities did fulfil the purpose of recruiting men into government services. During the three decades of the present century, however, the number of people receiving English education has grown at a very rapid rate and naturally the available posts have not been sufficient to accommodate all the young men equipped for, and aspiring to, the 'black-coated' professions. The Universities have, therefore, ceased to distribute sure charters of entry into government services. The situation has been further aggravated by unparalleled economic distress and depression during recent years. Taking these facts into consideration, one can easily understand and sympathise, though not agree, with the chagrin and disappointment of the average man at the failure of the Universities in making good what to him is their exclusive *raison d'être*. What is regrettable, however, is that better educated, and presumably better informed, men should have failed to detect the pardonable fallacy of this point of view and should have held the Univer-

sities responsible for a state of things of which they are in reality the victims.

This objection takes one or two common forms. Either people run down this or that University for its failure in putting through a certain number of specially coached students through the various competitive examinations and thus having contributed less civil servants and junior administrators than some other 'efficient' University. Those who have been lucky or clever enough to push themselves into government offices and services—in comparatively slacker times, of course!—usually favour the Universities with this sneer. Others who are anxious about the industrial and economic progress of the country bewail the fact that Universities are 'squandering' their resources on teaching Arts and Sciences instead of 'utilizing' them profitably by providing technical and industrial education. To the former the ideal University would be a magnified coaching centre where 'crammers'—that is their significant official designation—will put candidates for service through their paces. Efficiency will, of course, be measured with strict scientific accuracy, *i.e.*, as success in producing the maximum 'results'

with the minimum of effort, without any danger of time and attention being diverted to 'useless' pursuits and studies. The latter are unable to distinguish between the functions of a University and those of an Institute of Technology. Both are at one in not only being wrong in their views, on academic and educational grounds, but also short-sighted in the pursuit of their avowed objectives.

A University has often been defined as a centre of higher learning. The description implies that it is the one place in the matrix of a nation's life where creative intelligence can be freely developed and allowed to work on the constantly emerging problems and issues of contemporary life as well as on the ever recurring problems of standards and values. So long as University degrees continue, by statute, to be a pre-requisite for most of the higher services, Universities will certainly provide the large majority of government servants. But an attempt to interfere with the freedom of University work and syllabuses in the interests of any competitive examinations or the demands of services is suicidal to that free life of thought and research and cultural pre-occupations which should be the

concern of every true University. When students are inspired, not with the love of knowledge, not with the desire for the intelligent study of human problems and the intelligent service of great human purposes, but with the hope of passing certain external examinations, the entire object of University education is defeated. If the standards of University teaching are satisfactory and examinations are intelligently organized, some students will take them in the stride, as it were, instead of concentrating on them as the goal of their endeavour. Otherwise it will mean that the educational needs and values of a large majority will be perverted in the interests of a small, prize minority. It will tend appreciably to lower the standard of true scholarship for the sake of a limited and mechanical efficiency in passing examinations and thus do incalculable harm to Universities as centres of intellectual life. This is what is happening now at some Universities and unless the situation is retrieved by clear thinking and concerted action on the part of educationists, I am afraid this unintellectual tradition will spread to all Indian Universities and 'crammers' will be appointed everywhere to coach the best students for these examinations. And who knows

but that these 'crammers' may, in due course, take precedence over professors whose concern is, and should be, not so much with coaching their students for competitive successes, as with cultivating in them a respect for sincerity and truth, a high sense of scholarship, a love and earnestness for intellectual and cultural values, and a desire to realize them in their individual and social life. Worldly success, efficiency in examinations, the admission to highly prized services may be 'added unto them' as by-products; but they should never be the conscious ends and objectives pursued by the students, for that would not only bring down the standards of genuine scholarship but also tend to narrow down their interests and mental perspective. I realize that this is a rather unwelcome point of view to press in these days; it is 'too idealistic,' 'too far removed from the actualities of life,' 'too high-browed.' But I do not know where ideals and far-sighted vision are to find refuge in modern civilization if not in the Universities, which are meant to serve not merely as centre of training for the adolescents but as intellectual 'watch-towers' set up by the people for the guidance of their destinies. And where if not in the Universities, shall we expect an

eager recognition of the fact that the understanding of the world through the pursuit of knowledge is an absolute and ultimate good in itself?

A good deal of what I have said above also applies to the other popular demand that Universities should, for all practical purposes, be transformed into big technological institutes. As one who is painfully conscious of the poverty and unemployment that harass this country and of its undeveloped material resources, I would be the last person to minimize the importance of technological instruction. But I do not see why this demand, perfectly reasonable in its own place, should clamour like a rude barbarian at the doors of the Universities which are intrinsically *academic* institutions concerned with the creation, the promotion and the transmission of learning. It is within their legitimate scope to apply this knowledge to large human and social problems but they are not directly concerned with its practical application to devices, say for, tanning leather or manufacturing high-power explosives. In fact the growth of scientific knowledge, on which all technical progress and achievement ultimately depend, cannot take place unless there are 'disinterested' workers who will go on add-

ing to and enriching human knowledge without being swayed or distracted by any motives of immediate, practical gains. Thus an attempt to limit the study of abstract and theoretical sciences in the interests of a so-called 'practical' and technical education is not only an unwarranted interference with the legitimate work of the University; it is also disastrous from the point of view of technological efficiency. It is one of those situations where the straight line may possibly be the *shortest* distance between two points but it most certainly is not the *best*. Short-cut methods designed to restrict the travail of the intellect and prostituting all scientific knowledge *directly* to industrial ends harbour within themselves the causes of their own defeat. In the interests of all higher technical progress, it is essential that the various sciences should be taught and studied in Universities to the highest degree possible, and there should be a body of workers unconnected with, and uninterested in, specific industries and manufacturing processes and inspired primarily with the love of knowledge. It is not their business to be always on the lookout for possible 'applications' of this knowledge, though there may be amongst them a few who will make it

possible for 'two blades of grass to grow where one grew before.' But this application is essentially the business of a different order of workers whose avowed object and duty it should be to press scientific knowledge and discoveries into the service of human wants and purposes. The great progress which industry has made during the last few centuries in the west and the consequent transfer of wealth, influence and power in modern states to big industrialists have, however, tended to obscure this view and the Universities, dominated by these 'nouveaux riches,' who hold the purse-strings, have been successfully side-tracked into devoting their time and energy to technical pursuits which should have been the concern of different institutes. The only true criterion for the selection of University studies should have been, as previously suggested, their human and cultural implications and their power to release intelligence, to broaden understanding and deepen appreciation. But the criterion of a mechanical, money-making, 'quick-returns' efficiency has taken its place and the result has been the gradual ousting of the spirit of Arts and Sciences from its peaceful home, the University, and its defilement by a host of barbarous intruders

like Chairs of Brewery, Metallurgy, Dyeing, Home-making, Laundry and the like. Any one interested in finding out to what ridiculous extremes this narrow utilitarianism has been carried in certain very 'advanced' countries will find Flaxner's book: 'Universities—English, American and German,' highly thought-provoking reading. Unless our own educational policy is clearly thought out and released from bondage to all sorts of extraneous considerations, we might find ourselves following the 'efficient' example of the United States of America. It is imperative for us to envisage this issue clearly and unambiguously. The view of University education that I advocate does not minimize the importance of industrial progress and efficiency, nor look down upon industrial workers and their pursuits. But it does demand for the Universities an autonomy in their own affairs and the right to organize their academic life in the light of great and valuable human ideals and not with reference to side issues and immediate monetary gains. If the alumni of the University can take the services and the industries in their stride—and many of them *will* certainly do so if academic standards are high and earnest work is exacted from them—

well and good. But no one has the right to come over with this shabby measuring stick for evaluating the efficiency and cultural achievements of a University, which must always be measured, ultimately, in terms of the richness and breadth of life which it imparts to its students.

The third criticism which is often levelled against the University—and this time from the side of the advanced social and political workers—condemns them on the score of their being cut off from the rough and tumble of everyday political life of the country and carrying on its academic pursuits in cloistered seclusion. In our own country where peculiar political conditions have thrust politics into a position of exaggerated importance—with some justification, it must be admitted—we often come across the complaint made by ‘extremist’ politicians that the Universities are wasting the lives of the youth by keeping them within their shelter instead of sending them out to partake in the political struggle. This point of view, appealing as it does, to our sentiments of patriotism and nationalism, often takes in the unwary, as has been amply demonstrated in the recent political history of our own and other countries. But, educationally considered, this

view is as unsound as the others I have analysed. Without entering into any political controversies we can all realize that political work—in its accepted narrow signification—requires a maturity of judgment, an experience of men and affairs and a balanced outlook which we cannot reasonably expect to find in the youthful population of the Universities. These students are there to acquire and cultivate these qualities, partly through their academic studies, partly through the educative stimulus of the company of maturer minds and partly through that give and take of social and intellectual intercourse which always springs up in a well-regulated community of youth. To divert them prematurely from the educative resources of a cultural and invigorating environment—that a University ought to be—into the political field, or to transform Universities into training camps for ‘political’ work is in the interest, neither of education, nor of politics. It will deprive them of experiences, both social and intellectual, of the highest significance and throw them into the political arena, half-baked, insensitive to many of the finer values and inappreciative of many important issues and purposes. This political struggle will no doubt lay upon them the

impress of its own particular education but will, as certainly, fail to educate them into balanced and cultured human beings.

This must, however, *not* be interpreted as a plea for what is glibly, and somewhat euphemistically, called the separation of Education from politics. Under that innocuous looking phrase is sometimes advocated a divorce between education and all those real, living problems of contemporary life the study of which is essential for every intelligent citizen who desires to take part in modern affairs. These timid or conservative or 'safety-first' people would like to ban in the Universities the study of all vital movements of modern thought—of socialism and communism, of the theory of evolution, of great fiction which stirs up stagnant ideas about social ills and injustices, and of history which has the temerity to tell unpleasant truths instead of being content with pleasant half-truths and convenient fiction. Such a policy will destroy the University as an intellectual centre and defeat its true *raison d'être* altogether. While, on the one hand, we insist that the academic atmosphere of the University should not be disturbed by the importation of the party passions and prejudices which always

accompany political activity—particularly in times of stress—we can never, for a moment, countenance the policy of making University education anæmic, lifeless and divorced from reality by forbidding the calm, earnest and unbiassed study and discussion of all the living streams of contemporary thought whether in Religion or Philosophy or the Social and Physical sciences. For the University, I repeat, is the one intellectual centre in the rush and storm of modern life where the requisite conditions are or should be available for the dispassionate examination and analysis of all great problems and issues, unaffected by the temptations and blinding irrelevancies which make clarity of thought so difficult in this age of unreflective hurry and competition. While refraining, therefore, from actual participation in the political affray it will be keenly alive and sensitive to all new movements and ideas—evaluating their significance, rejecting the unworthy, and interpreting to the people those that hold out the promise of enriching individual and collective life. The maintenance of such an agency, jealous of its rights and freedom, and conscious of its important rôle is particularly necessary in the present age of democracy and mass movements when collective

mediocrity threatens to replace individual excellence and the rapid and efficient transmission of ready-made opinions discounts the capacity for original thinking and substitute for it a uniformity of reactions. Discussing this tendency, implicit in all modern democratic communities, the great English psychologist, James Ward, suggests: "What we want are new ideas to try our tolerance and challenge our attention, new ideas in every department of thought and life in which progress is possible, new ideas to be received without prejudice or prepossession This is Nature's plan: with a single eye to progress, she takes all variations on their merit, eliminating the old only when the new is better and selecting the new only when the old is worse. Yet she does more: she takes pains to ensure that variations will not be lacking"

That, no doubt, is Nature's plan; but, considering the stage of intellectual maturity that we have attained, we cannot remain content with the operation of Nature's wasteful, if ultimately beneficial, ways. We have to assist Nature actively and with conscious intent. With reference to the present discussion, it means that it is to the Universities that we must look for providing a stimulating

cultural environment where this clash and contact of ideas, this reconstruction of human thought and attitudes towards better forms may be carried out through purposeful endeavour. If they are content merely with turning out raw graduates with a smattering of traditional or current knowledge or with producing entrants for the services, the professions and the industrial enterprises they will at best be an instrument for maintaining the *status quo* in national life. They will not provide intellectual leadership and people will be caught—as they have often been caught in the past—in the whirl of changes which they do not understand and cannot consequently control. Nothing can arrest this flow of change which characterizes life—which really *is* life; it depends primarily on the imaginative vision and the clarity of judgment of the Universities whether these changes are to overwhelm us like irresistible catastrophes or can be fashioned into instruments of our conscious purposes. The ideal of the University, as I visualize it, should be the creation of a vigorous intellectual and cultural environment where the best and most creative minds will find a welcome refuge for their work of study and research and where a constantly renewed stream

of young men and women will be trained to be sent out as the heralds and prophets of progressive social, political and moral values. They will be later engaged, no doubt, in their different and specific callings but to the performance of all their work, whether social or vocational or political, they will bring a characteristic attitude of mind—an intelligence that is keen and sincere and intolerant of hypocrisy, a sensitiveness to all that is great and worthy of sympathy, a tolerant humaneness of outlook which is a condition precedent to all genuine social service and a readiness for active endeavour in behalf of interests and causes that appeal to our intelligent devotion. These might possibly strike some people as exaggerated expectations to entertain but, to my mind, that point of view argues a narrow outlook on the educational problem. Unless the University can learn to cultivate this attitude—with differences in detail, no doubt, but preserving its essentials—it will fail to leave its characteristic impress on its students and to train them for the responsible part they have to play in the modern world.

CHAPTER IX

THE PLACE OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN NATIONAL LIFE

ALL those who are working in, or have been educated at, a University are naturally concerned with and interested in the problems of university education—its aims and ideals, its methods and organization, and its function in the economy of national life. This interest is not merely academic or theoretical. During recent years, the problem has become very acute and has been thrust on our attention by the increasing stream of criticism to which Indian universities are being subjected. Of course, there are sometimes criticisms of detail or of particular irregularities and defects which have a purely local bearing and value. With these we need not concern ourselves. My purpose, in this article, is to try and analyse the fundamental charge which is being brought forward against university education as a whole—namely, that it has failed to meet the demands of national life and to adjust itself to the cultural and material needs of the country.

Individual critics had been condemning the mechanical and superficial education provided by the universities for a long time. But searching of hearts began on a large scale with the report of the Calcutta University Commission, which laid bare a very deplorable state of affairs in the secondary as well as the higher education of Bengal. As an indirect result of this report which, however, failed to find acceptance in the Calcutta University itself, several of the universities founded since are of a residential type, concerned more with teaching and the provision of an educative environment for their students than with large scale examinations. But even this new departure was not successful in placing Indian education on a sound footing. Disappointment with their results and general discontent with the entire system have been steadily growing and educationists in various parts of India have been attempting new experiments and new adjustments. This ferment of thought is indicated by the fact that, during the last few years, the Delhi University, the Aligarh Muslim University and the Punjab University have been examined, the one by a Commission and the other by an Inquiry Committee, while the legislatures have been

grappling with the problems of university re-organization in Bombay, in Madras, in Mysore and elsewhere. The educational situation, as a whole, has been examined with considerable care by the Hartog Committee and its analysis reveals a state of things which is far from satisfactory.

It is not my intention to examine these Reports and the Bills that have been introduced in various provincial legislatures. Any one who cares to study these documents will realize that the central problem for the educationists and educational authorities—the two terms are generally by no means synonymous, unfortunately!—is to bring our educational activity into line with the needs and ideals of national life and to make it responsive to the new forces and phenomena which are emerging in the country. The present system of education was imported as a foreign product more than a hundred years ago, and although it has been expanding in all directions, it has not yet struck roots in the soil and does not draw its sustenance and nourishment from the cultural heritage and thought of the Indian people. And unless education is, in this sense, “nationalized”—and it is no small and easy undertaking, as some people pretend—all attempted improve-

ments and changes would merely touch the fringes of the problem. As Sir J. C. Bose declared in his Convocation Address to the Punjab University in 1927:—

“I believe that nothing which is not innate in our civilization can give us strength for a truly national revival Any great work that is to endure must, therefore, be through the awakening of all that India has conserved by her inheritance and culture.”

I

It will help us in our inquiry as to the true function of a University in national life, if we ask ourselves what is the real conception of a university. Many answers and definitions have been offered. I take, as a peg for my argument, Carlyle's famous dictum: “A true university in these days is a collection of books.” There is, no doubt, a certain measure of truth in it and it may, quite legitimately, be used as the text of a sermon by the harassed librarian of a university clamouring for more funds for his department. But it does not give us an adequate and comprehensive definition of a university. It makes the university synonymous with a library of books. Let us,

therefore, ask ourselves: "What are books?" Milton gives us a definition: "A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, treasured up and embalmed on purpose to a life beyond life." Now it is true that they are the product, and sometimes the essence, of the life and learning and creative thought of the master-spirits of the past. But they are a very bloodless substitute for life itself. They are indispensable for interpreting the past and illuminating the present life, but not good enough to take the place of that pulsating life itself rich in all kinds of experiences. "Life-blood," bottled up for centuries, cannot be so vitalizing and stimulating as the warm contact of living minds, responsive to the life of the present.

Moreover, to interpret the intellectual treasures of the past, to bring home to the generations of today the message and heritage of the generations that have gone before, we need the services of the master-spirits of the present day, who will not only explain but adapt, modify and judge the achievements of the past in the light of the aims, ideals, knowledge and values of the present. Without their human touch, the books would remain a dead letter, a mass of information that

will burden the mind but not inspire the intellect. Books and apparatus are valuable auxiliaries in that interchange of experience, that spiritual communion, that contact of mind with mind which goes on between the teacher and the taught. But they cannot take the place of this human contact.

Further light is thrown on the true conception of the university, if we look to the etymology of the word. A university is, literally, a small "universe" with a definite purpose—"a corporation of learning." This definition leads us to visualize the university as a place where distinguished scholars gather together to carry on higher studies and research in their several subjects. At the same time they guide the young students entrusted to them in their own special departments of learning, gradually associating the more advanced and promising of them in their creative, intellectual efforts. They keep the torch of knowledge burning—advancing the boundaries of learning, conquering new fields from the domain of darkness and ignorance. Lantern-bearers of Truth in the world's chaos of economic, social and political struggles! In return, society provides them with facilities for intellectual work

and sets them free from the ordinary struggle for existence.

Thus we can conceive of the university as a place of research where new and necessary knowledge is developed, and young men, who are, later on, to become the exponents of and authorities on that knowledge receive their training and spiritual baptism. In the words of President Baker:—*
“The Modern University stands for humanistic studies, for profound scientific knowledge, for experiment and discovery, for thorough technological and professional training, for extension of its service to the people Higher education not merely preserves and transmits the heritage of the past, but aims at adaptation and progress.” The essence of the university, however, is always this association of developed with plastic minds, both dedicated to a life of strenuous search after Truth.

The ancient “universities” of India or of the Muslim countries were universities in this sense that they consisted of distinguished scholars of the age, at whose feet students from all parts of

* The function of University education.

the world sought for knowledge and guidance. In fact every scholar of eminence was a university in himself, often an authority not on one or two but several subjects. He worked for the development and dissemination of knowledge as a labour of love, regarding it as a sacred trust and duty. These men did not take up this work as a profession but as a vocation—though, of course, the pupils or public patronage would often relieve them of their few and elementary wants. They wrote books—these venerable scholars—at a time when the writing of a book was a very arduous undertaking and the press was not in existence. Some of them left, literally, hundreds of manuscripts dealing with a variety of subjects—ranging from theology to medicine—all written with care, with infinite labour, with a punctilious regard for accuracy. One wonders now how they could press so much literary work within the short space of a life-time. To us the mere transcription of so many manuscripts seems to be the labour of several life-times. For, our standards of literary achievement and intellectual activity have been lowered to such an extent that often when an author produces an ordinary, readable book—or *compiles* one!—on economics or

psychology, or the history of literature or any other subject, people look upon him as an authority on that subject. But in India and the Islamic countries of the past, the standard of scholarship was higher and, generally speaking, no one could enter the gates of the House of Immortals till he had given to the service of knowledge and truth the devotion of a life-time and pressed into it creative thought or research work of a very high standard. The same is generally true—particularly in the sciences—of the western countries today. A university professorship is often the recognition of extraordinary academic distinction.

A few words may be added about the type of students in these universities of old. These universities were not then, as they threaten to become today, mere centres of narrow vocational training. Students flocked to them because they thought it worth their while to acquire knowledge for its own sake. I do not myself believe in the principle of "knowledge for the sake of knowledge," for, to me it seems that everything must be referred to one common denominator, Life. But it certainly shows that they were serious-minded students. They did not join these centres

of learning either "to have a good time" or to secure a passport to Government service. They were prepared to bear hardships and make sacrifices in the pursuit of their goal. Thus they would travel from place to place, learning theology here under the inspiration of one great divine, studying medicine there under some great "Tabib," and then proceed, may be for law or logic or metaphysics, to some other place rendered famous by the domicile of some other distinguished scholar. Thus these travelling students spent a good part of their life at these shrines of learning, and some of them equipped themselves to take hold of the torch of learning as it fell from the hands of their departing masters, to hold it aloft for the generation to come and hand it over to their successors when the time came for them to relinquish the sacred trust and vanish into the unknown.

It is not my purpose to paint a roseate picture of the past, but I believe it is always useful and illuminating to keep our hold on origins. Institutions grow and develop. Especially in our times, they have been growing and developing so quickly that we are likely to forget their initial purposes and function, and lose ourselves in the

mere details of rules and organization. These older Universities had, no doubt, their weak points. They were handicapped and limited in various ways. They did not focus and crystallize their resources. They involved a great sacrifice of time on the part of the students who became wanderers in the pursuit of knowledge and spent too large a portion of their life in mere preparation. Also, there was overlapping and waste. On the side of organization, the system was weak; on the side of aims and ideals and atmosphere it was strong. Moreover, it denied knowledge to no one—even the highest education was at the disposal of every one who cared for it strongly enough. Poverty was no bar then as it is today. The university was really a “corporation of learning” where the professors and their students lived, in association, a life of plain living and high thinking. Their learning left an impress on their whole personality because it formed not only their mind but coloured their entire attitude to life.

I do not advocate, however, a reversion to the old forms—because, amongst other reasons, it would be physically impossible. The entire organization of human life has been re-shaped under the stress of certain far-reaching social,

political and economic changes. The industrial revolution, the changed balance in political affairs, the increased opportunities for intercourse and communication, the conquests of science over the forces of the physical environment—all these have changed the normal course of human life almost beyond recognition. And not only have the external conditions of living been modified and transformed but the quality of our inner life has been greatly influenced and altered, demanding a new interpretation of our whole philosophy and system of social and individual ethics. The demands which society makes on the schools and the universities are no longer the same as they were, say, two hundred years ago. In the light of these changes we have to re-examine the aims and functions of all human institutions, to challenge and test their claims to our allegiance, with a view to bringing them into harmony with the spirit of the age. Thinkers are examining, with this object, all the various elements in the complex fabric of modern civilization—the idea and theory of the State, the economic organization of Society, the division of the classes, the Industrial evolution, the functions of Religion This challenge comes, with even greater

force, to the educational institutions, particularly the universities, which are or should be an active force for the guidance and control of this tremendous evolution, and whose handling of the situation may determine the direction of our progress. It is this function of a modern university in the complex, varied and busy life of the age that I want to interpret with a view to considering what reorganization, in general terms, is needed in our Universities in the light of modern ideas.

A University is obviously the highest institution of learning in the land and as such, it should be the repository of the learning, the culture and the literary and scientific heritage of the past. It is, in a word, a storehouse of all that is worthy of preservation from the intellectual achievements of the past. It makes available to its students the legacy of the ages—"the Glory that was Greece," "the Grandeur that was Rome," the rich contributions made by the Hindus, the Saracens, the Chinese and other nations, and the contributions which are being made every day by the modern age. It also provides teachers of the highest distinction who will interpret the symbols of the past into realities intelligible to the modern mind,

thus enabling the students to come into active and fruitful possession of what has been bequeathed to them and to acquire capacity for further progress.

But the University is not *merely* a storehouse. It is also a laboratory of intellectual research where the light of creative intelligence is allowed to play on the problems of knowledge and of national life, and where national institutions and values are subjected to unbiassed, scientific criticism with a view to placing before the public better standards and ideals and helping them to solve the intricate problems of their everyday life in an intelligent manner. For the progress of mankind depends on an ever-increasing conquest of the realm of knowledge, on the capacity to create and receive new ideas, on the development of an objective, scientific attitude of mind, on the patient exercise of a judgment not to be swayed by passions and prejudices. Without new knowledge, the world would remain stationary—which really amounts to going back. This new knowledge is to be wrested from the bosom of Nature, through patient observation, through intelligent understanding of the forces and movements of natural and social life and through the applica-

tion of the knowledge of the past to the conditions of the present. There is no organized human institution more suitable for this work than a well-equipped and well-staffed university. This "intellectual creativeness" should be made the real test and hall-mark of every system of higher education today—especially of the universities. Any university that is content to be, like many of the Indian universities today, merely a teaching centre for certain subjects is nothing but a magnified school with false pretensions. It cannot possibly develop the individuality and the supreme creative powers of the nation. To awaken these powers, *all* the students must be trained in the spirit and methods of investigation and research, not because they will all become research workers, but because of the valuable intellectual discipline and stimulus involved in it and because, through it, many a promising student would be able to discover himself. We have to remember that "original research," as it is called, is not the peculiar province of scientists or advanced students only. In the words of Professor John Dewey, "all acquiring of knowledge or skill, is secondary and instrumental to inquiring"—it is a quest for something that the

seeker does not know at present. In this sense, all thinking is research, an intellectual adventure which may lead anywhere; original for him who carries it on, no matter if every one else in the world is acquainted with what he has discovered for himself. Mere passive reception and assimilation of knowledge, either from books or from lectures, is below the real dignity and intellectual standard of the university student, and he who is content with it carries not intellectual power but a great deal of mental burden.

Research, then, should be one of the foremost aims of a university—the advancement of knowledge and the propagation of truth. This is the great contribution which the university can make to the life of the nation. “The highest expression in the life of a nation must be its intellectual eminence and its power of enriching the world by advancing the frontiers of knowledge. When a nation has lost this power, *when it merely receives and has nothing to give*, then its healthy life is over and it sinks into a degenerate existence which is purely parasitic. The status of a great university cannot be secured by any artificial means, nor can any charter assure it. Its world status is only to be won by the

intrinsic value of great contributions made by its scholars.”*

I have italicized the phrase, “when it merely receives and has nothing to give,” in order to bring out the sad plight of our universities in the light of this remark. Our intellectual life has become impoverished and our claim to the respect of the world weakened by the unimaginative utilitarianism of our universities. Intellectually, the tragedy of our universities is that they have nothing to give. With but few exceptions the standard of scholarship in comparison with foreign universities, is deplorably low. That is why so many of our students have to go to foreign countries, at great expense and sacrifice, for advanced studies, so much so that even for subjects like Indian History and Archæology, Islamic Studies and Oriental Languages and—incredible as it seems!—for Urdu literature, foreign degrees are considered to be of much higher value. Indian universities have been content in the past with training students for clerical and administrative services. Even today, the highest ambition of most Indian universities is to

* Convocation Address (Sir J. C. Bose).

see their students successful in the various competitive examinations and steps are being taken by them "to improve their present condition" by making provisions for regularly coaching students for service competitions. This is a new danger against which the educationists of the country need to guard themselves. It is not my purpose to belittle the services. They have their significance in national life. But it must be emphatically asserted that it is *not* the business of a university to train students *directly* to this end. Any tinkering with the university syllabus or methods or ideals, on this ground *only*, would ultimately defeat the very purpose which it is meant to serve. It is only by raising the general intellectual level of the students and their work that we can expect them to distinguish themselves in the various competitions in life, and not by giving them a sort of specialized vocational training.

This should not be taken to mean that I am depreciating "Utility," as a value in life. I believe, on the other hand, that if one gives the word a broad, human sense, it can be made a criterion for measuring the worth of all human creations. Is research, you may ask, useful? It

is. You *must* supplement purely "utilitarian" knowledge and instruction by carrying on disinterested investigation. Does the discovery of a certain new theory about light or a new law of Nature help you to make more money or raise better crops? You never can tell. It may seem a "useless" piece of knowledge today, and may be used to-morrow to bring about a veritable revolution in human life. In the history of science, often has the advance in knowledge been theoretical at first, application coming much later. When Newton discovered the law of Gravitation or Faraday brought electricity down to earth, or when the transmission of electric waves was made possible without wires, people asked the same questions—some of them very impertinently. Yet, today these discoveries are not only a precious acquisition to man's knowledge but also of immense practical utility. Some of the most wonderful inventions of modern times are based on them and they have added immeasurably to the well-being of mankind. That, however, is not the only justification of research work—this distant hope of its being practically useful. As Bertrand Russell points out in his book "On Education," *the*

understanding of the world is an ultimate good.' The desire to know and explore is rooted in the innermost forces of our being. When our material wants have been met, we usually turn to the pursuit of knowledge and beauty because this pursuit satisfies our nature and our love of "strenuous creation." Apart, therefore, from any practical application that our research may have, it is useful or "utilitarian" in the wide human sense to which I have referred—in the sense that it ministers to the development of our power and personality and calls into play some of our highest intellectual and moral qualities.

When I speak of Research as a function of the university, I do not mean merely a dipping into the old, forgotten, far-off things which no one has ever touched and which have very little concern, if any, with our present life. Research on out-of-the-way subjects, on Hebrew manuscripts, on psychology as it might have been understood by the Assyrians, or a minor, little known poet of some far-off language—all this might have some value and a nation might spare a few scholars for these fancy pursuits. But I attach greater importance and my sympathies are more

strongly enlisted on the side of work connected with living problems of national life. The university should be in vital *rapport* with living national problems, embracing within its purview all questions, social and political, industrial and economic, religious and moral. Its business is to subject everything to unbiassed academic criticism—interpreting, revising, revaluing old values, standards and assumptions. It is this critical, truth seeking habit which has to be developed. Knowledge is to be sought certainly, but knowledge in relation to the life that environs us, enriching our understanding of the world, deepening our appreciation of beauty and of the moral order, and improving our capacity to utilize and control the forces of Nature. The university should, in the words of Jesus Christ, exist, that we may “have life and have it more abundantly,” and this it can give to the people of a country by training men to utilize expert and humanized intelligence for the improvement of human life. In modern times, all aspects of life are becoming more and more complicated and elaborate. The ordinary man in the street cannot be expected to understand and decide complex economic issues or to work out the implications of new political

and moral doctrines without being biassed and confused by interested propaganda. Here lies the opportunity for the university to render service to the cause of national welfare by standing for clarity of thought, breadth of vision and freedom from sectarianism and intolerance. In other words, this is the type of the mind which it has got to train and develop and I cannot define it better than by quoting the late Dr. James Ward* in this connection:—

“The value of a single man or woman of open mind, independent judgment, and moral courage, who requires to be convinced and refuses to be cajoled, is only concerned to be right and not afraid to be singular, deferring to reason but not to rank, true to his or her own self, and therefore not false to any man—the value of such a man or woman is priceless: a nation of such would leaven and regenerate the world”—a “nation,” which it is the business of the University to create.

* Ward: Psychology applied to Education.

II

We turn now to the discussion of the conditions which must be fulfilled before a university can aspire to become a centre of living research and a training ground for leaders of thought and action. The first condition is the provision of teachers qualified to guide, direct and carry on research. A university should bring together the best brains available in the country or outside and make it worth their while to accept its service and carry on their academic work in its name. The reputation, say, of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, as of the other great universities of the world, is due to the fact that they have been able to secure the services of some of the most distinguished intellects of the country. Their well-organized system of fellowships and endowed university chairs often attracts the best talent of the country, provides a favourable environment for its growth, and ultimately makes it an ornament and distinction of its academic life. The publications—of each one of them—in Science and Philosophy, in History and Economics, in Education and Sociology would fill a decent sized library. That is how they have been able to

impress the world with their intellectual worth and status. And now this reputation is, in itself, the most persuasive attraction for gifted people to make them their intellectual home.

Let us take as a practical illustration the case of the Aligarh University. The fame of Aligarh during its early days—the days of Sir Syed Ahmad and after—was really due to Sir Syed's success in bringing together some of the best brains of the community, who carried on their intellectual and literary work either within the precincts of the M. A. O. College, or in close association with it. The names of Sir Syed himself, of Hali and Shibli and Viqar-ul-Mulk and Justice Mahmood and Mohsin-ul-Mulk are so closely associated with it that the glory of their great achievements was reflected on this institution which they held so dear. If Aligarh is to recapture its prestige and keep it intact in this fast progressing and competitive world, it should become not only the nurturing ground of budding talent but also the sanctuary and welcome home of men whose genius has already flowered and made its mark. It will have to get distinguished people on its permanent staff and associate distinguished outsiders in its work,

by inviting them to deliver lectures and come into contact with students, and occasionally, by persuading some of them to settle down in Aligarh, connected in an informal way with its alumni and its activities.

We should bear in mind that two types of teachers will be needed in a University. There should, of course, be specialists and experts in the various faculties who would guide and organize research work for themselves and their students with the help of capable assistants. They should be given all kinds of facilities for their work—a well-equipped library, laboratories and apparatus, plenty of leisure and above all an atmosphere of honest work, free from party strife and other distracting influences. The amount of obligatory work to be demanded of them in the form of class lectures would be reduced as much as circumstances may permit. They would mainly lecture on problems and topics in which they have been carrying on higher studies or research and thus speak with an authority that would convince and an enthusiasm that would inspire. Thus a true university teacher and scholar, like Browning's Grammarian, consecrates his life to the cultivation of the field of knowledge,

large or small, which he has chosen for himself. He seeks to attain perfection in it, disdainful of easy triumphs and temptations of vanity, ascending the uphill path of truth with undeterred aim—thus forming what has been happily called, “the new priesthood of humanity.” Without such fervent devotion and dedication to a noble ideal, it is not possible to fill others with enthusiasm or to infect them with one’s own attitude of mind.

This does not, however, imply that, like Browning’s Grammarian, the university teacher should lead a life of strict seclusion, dead to all other living interests of the world and out of touch with men and realities. For knowledge which is divorced from life and gathered only from books becomes barren and formal and lacks vitality. God’s great Universe is the laboratory where men can acquire living knowledge. Especially is this contact with pulsating life necessary for teachers who deal with problems of living and current importance—teachers of economics, history, politics, sociology, education, literature and philosophy. They must enrich their own experience and personality if they aspire to add to the richness and fullness of others’ experience. It

is not that the teacher is asked to be less of a scholar but more of "a living force," the modern view of a scholar being that he is also a citizen. "The Scholar," says Baker, "is made wise by touch with men He knows that idleness and selfish culture mean degeneracy. He is not the creature of vagrant fancies of formal logic or blind conscience but a being of heart and mind and will—the trinity of the complete man—living life in all its entirety, a part of the present world's great constructive forces." Such a person who has within him the combination of the conscientious citizen and the indefatigable research worker, is the ideal university teacher. He does not, of course, stalk about round every street corner to be easily captured, but his human approximations are available if the universities have the wisdom to look for him and the insight to recognize him.

Side by side, with such scholars, who would usually give side-views of reality, as it were, cut it up into pieces and treat their own piece as if it were a whole, there should be teachers who have a synthetic and comprehensive view of life. They may not be experts in any specialized branch of knowledge but they would be able, through their talk and their example

and attitude, to give the students a balanced view of the world and their place in it. They would attempt to restore balance to the mind and personality of the student who is apt to be confused in this jungle of facts and forces and phenomena, unable to see the wood for the trees and liable to think of life as merely physical, or chemical or logical or literary. Moreover many of the subjects of study, especially the scientific, deal with facts and objective truths. They do not recognize nor deal with values. The function of these people, in some way attached to the university, would be to build up a system of healthy values in the mind of the students and to awaken their interests in the wider and broader issues of life. It may be difficult for some people, who are given to thinking of the University in formal terms, to visualize the function of such people or their mental equipment. But they would understand the point better if they take for an illustration the intellectual stimulus provided by occasional visits and lectures given by great scholars of international fame at the Universities.

The second essential condition for creating an academic atmosphere favourable for intellec-

tual development is University autonomy, *i.e.*, freedom to organize its intellectual life without let or hindrance from outside. If the University is to attain its high ideal, it cannot afford to be dependent on the State or the Church, *i.e.*, the religious priesthood, or brook the interference of unintelligent plutocrats and industrialists. In our country, of course, the rich people are usually not interested, and have not the imagination to be interested in the universities. But, wherever their influence has prevailed in the governance of the universities it has been, on the whole, undesirable. For, wealth, though a good servant and an essential means to progress, has the tendency to try and dominate seats of learning and play the rôle of the master. In Europe and America wealthy industrialists often endow the universities with large sums of money, but they also sometimes become a nuisance because they presume to lay down what they require of the universities. It is all very well for the universities to take into account the demands of industry and vocational life, but it is a betrayal of their trust for them to permit these to prescribe University aims. It is not merely amusing to read that a gentleman in America, with more money than

brains, has recently endowed a "Chair of Brewing" in a university, possibly to do honour to it as a dying art! No self-respecting university should put up with doubtful gifts of this kind. For, what will it avail a University if it should gain the whole world but lose its own soul?

In India, the interference comes mainly not from the side of industry but from Government which presumes to fetter the freedom of the University by dominating it through an official element in its councils or restricting its academic freedom in other ways. A university, not chartered by the State, is at a tremendous disadvantage. It wins no support either from public funds or private resources and its students find many avenues of employment closed to them, so that people who want to attempt a new departure in educational methods and ideals have to take their choice between sacrificing, to a considerable extent, their liberty of action and languishing for want of funds and support. This check to freedom in Indian universities has been one of the important factors in restricting their intellectual development and widening the gulf between them and national life.

Closely allied with the demand for freedom is the demand for toleration, for the one cannot be realized without the other. The free exercise of thought which is to be encouraged in the universities must be carried on in an atmosphere of toleration, because free thought engenders differences which must be respected and discussed in a spirit of mutual give-and-take. The university will, of course, expect all its members to be loyal to its outstanding ideals, but, within the scope permitted by these ideals, it should leave the individuals free to develop their thought and personality along their own lines. Too many sign-posts along the road, warning the wayfarer at every step against this or that trespass, would crush the creative self-expression of men who have the capacity to mark out new lines of thought for themselves.

Freedom and tolerance, then, are the life-breath of a university, whose authority should rest, not on any official recognition, but 'on the right of Truth to command obedience' and respect. This is the main function of the university—to be engaged in this search after Truth in an atmosphere of freedom, to stand for the spirit of enquiry rather than dogmatism, for Truth never

stands still and has many faces. It is through this conquest of Truth, always enlarging but never complete, that the university can give us the fullness and freedom of life. It was Lessing, the great German writer and critic, who said, "Were God to offer me the Truth in one hand and the search for Truth in the other, I would choose the search." The universities would do well if they also choose as Lessing would have done.

These are the most important requisites which a proper university atmosphere postulates. There are some other conditions which are almost equally important, but their importance is so obvious that one need not labour the point at any length. There is, for example, Carlyle's point of emphasis—a fully equipped and well-organised library of old and new books as well as valuable manuscripts, without which creative thought would die of starvation. It should, however, be emphasised that the library is not merely to exist but to be used actively by the members of the university and its effective use should be encouraged and facilitated amongst students by carefully thought out means and by the open alcove system of books, by displaying prominently new books and their descriptive covers, by critical

and appreciative reviews of important works, by providing facilities for quiet, undisturbed study in the library. The university should also arrange for its teachers facilities for travel and study abroad, because otherwise they are apt to become stagnant or "fossilized," out of touch with what is happening elsewhere in their subjects. They need a change after a certain period of hard, honest work—both for physical and intellectual reasons. American as well as some European institutions have provided for this by generally giving their teachers leave on full pay for one year after every seven years of service for study abroad, and I believe some Mission Colleges in India are also trying this experiment. Other Indian Universities, too, will have to work out some similar arrangement. It is only those teachers who have received the highest education and dedicated their life to its service, who work in complete freedom, who have all facilities for their study and research in the university and outside—they alone can create a genuine academic atmosphere in the university.

Before I pass on to discuss certain changes in methods of teaching and study which these ideas imply it is necessary to answer a very likely

criticism against these views. It may be said that I have unduly exalted and magnified the place of research and intellectual activity in the University, without paying due heed to the claims of a very large number of young men who come to it either to receive a kind of "general cultural training," or equipment for their future professions. I shall have something to say about the vocational question later but may add a few words here on the other line of attack. This really represents the old conception of the University as designed to train "gentlemen," and this "gentlemanly ideal" has had such a long run in educational history that it is difficult to get it out of peoples' mind. In fact, it almost seems an irreverence to try to do so. But it will have to be done here in India, even as circumstances are compelling the older English universities, the chief strongholds of the idea, to revise their standpoint. We must realize that the university is not a place where every young man, who can afford a certain amount of money, may spend a few years of cultured ease. It is intrinsically a place where the best brains of the community are gathered together to develop and nourish the most promising brains of the growing generation. The

criterion for admission should be the capacity of the student to profit from the higher instruction which the university provides, *i.e.*, it should be an intellectual criterion. If a poor student is intellectually fitted to derive benefit from University education, poverty should be no bar; and conversely a well-to-do young man, who is not gifted with good brains, has no right *ipso facto* to secure admission in preference to better qualified candidates.

This view may possibly savour of intellectual snobbery in some people's opinion, but they must bear in mind that, in the university at least, we should stand for quality rather than quantity and we should courageously reverse, whenever necessary, the unfair economic standards which prevail everywhere else in life. Moreover, it is good, neither for the individuals nor for the community, that the resources of higher education should be squandered on immature or inferior brains who cannot effectively utilize them. It is unfair to the individuals, in the long run, because through university education, they are led to lines of work for which they are not naturally suited and taken away from other equally respectable lines along which they could have more successfully express-

ed themselves. It is unfair to the community because it does not get the maximum return out of its investment.

What will happen then to the fairly large number of men who desire the general social and cultural advantages of a few years at the university but may not possess the necessary intellectual equipment for the higher type of work? This is a very difficult problem to tackle, but its solution may perhaps be found in two directions. We require a careful and effective reorganization of our secondary education, a reorganization which would certainly involve the widening of its scope and the raising of its standard, so that students who have passed through it may really gain as much intellectual stimulus and general cultural training as we attempt, though very lamely, to provide through "college" education. Most of the occupations and services and technical institutions will have to be declared open to all who have received this secondary education, thus diminishing the pressure on the degree courses. Educational thought in India is closely moving towards this point of view, after a painful experience, and we may shortly see that the B.A. degree has ceased to be a necessary condition for many of

the appointments and admissions to technical colleges. Secondly, it might be found feasible to permit a certain number of attached students to reside in the university and take part in its social and academic life, without being necessarily called upon to take any examinations. Of course, considerable care will have to be exercised, but I am convinced that the idea is workable and is being worked, in fact, at some German universities, though under somewhat different circumstances. But all those who wish to go out into the world, with the hall-mark of a University degree, should be prepared to accept its high standard of work and achievement and should never be permitted to scrape through at the bottom of the lowest class, without acquiring any intellectual maturity or scholarship.

III

The organization of research in the University and the raising of its general intellectual standard also postulate certain changes in our teaching methods. Students, who have finished their secondary education, have to be equipped mentally to enter into the work of the University, by adopting methods of teaching and learning which would

awaken their active intelligence and enable them to appropriate knowledge by personal effort. The present methods of teaching in the universities as well as the schools and the colleges are defective. They do not make any call on the spirit of investigation or the capacity for the *organization* of knowledge through purposeful study or the love of creativeness, and thus leave out of account the superior powers and functions of the mind. They mostly draw upon the memory or intelligence of the imitative and interpretative quality. I can refer here but briefly to the lines along which changes will have to be made.

It is necessary to abolish "spoon-feeding" methods. Modern educational theory and intelligent observation have alike condemned them as unsuitable and harmful even for schools, and naturally they are much more so at the university stage. A university teacher should neither teach text-books, chapter by chapter, elucidating "difficulties"—which, unfortunately, because of a foreign medium of instruction, often mean difficulties of language—as if books on literature or history or philosophy were meant to provide linguistic exercises ! Nor should he make his own lectures a substitute for reading on the part of the

students, summarising in them the important points of various text-books. A lecture is meant to illuminate, to discover and reveal system and connection amongst the conflicting facts and views of different schools of thought, and to direct reading along fruitful channels. With his wider reading and more mature judgment, the teacher can see the bearings, the inter-connections, the *unities* of his subject better and is, therefore, in a position to guide his students who are struggling towards light through their spontaneous effort. It is only on the basis of private and intelligent reading done by the student that a professor's lecture can be really useful. The present system of numerous daily lectures in the university is doubly harmful—for the teachers, because they cannot give enough care to the quality of their teaching and consider it a duty to "cover the whole course," and for the students to whom it is a mechanical routine. Such lectures cease to be an inspiration and become a task mutually distasteful. If the teaching in our universities were properly organized, we would give much greater attention to tutorial work and directing of studies, and cut down the number of compulsory formal lectures, leaving the Professors free to

lecture from time to time on their special subjects of study and research. Under these circumstances, the quality of teaching would greatly improve and there would be much less temptation or necessity to 'learn up' a subject sketchily for the sake of lecturing. To quote once again from the address of Sir J. C. Bose:—

“Teaching and research are indissolubly connected with each other. The spirit of research cannot be imparted by mere lectures on antiquated theories which are often entirely baseless and which effectively block all further progress. Nothing can be so destructive of originality as blind acceptance of ex-cathedra statements. The true function of a great teacher is to train his disciples to discover things for themselves It is only from a burning candle that others can be lighted. The pupils by working under such a teacher will learn the value of persistence and of the infinite care to be taken at every step; they will catch from him glimpses of inspiration by which he succeeds in wresting from Nature her most jealously guarded secrets. They will become a part of his being and will hand down a passionate love of truth through fleeting generations. That spirit can never die. We shall pass away and

even kingdoms may disappear. Truth alone will survive, for it is eternal."

What then would be the ideal of the future academic faculty and the professors of the university? Not to "teach" and lecture day after day, for several hours daily, but to guide and inspire discriminate and worth while reading in their subjects, raising them above the temptation of cheap and worthless stuff; to give the students the benefit of their own study and research, partly by illuminating what the students are doing and partly by bringing up their knowledge to date; and to "pool" individual studies and results for the benefit of all. The idea is that the results and fruits of the study done by every member of the class or the group should be made available for the rest. The papers and essays will be written by various members of the group on different topics after the general line of treatment has been discussed and reading references given. These papers will be read to the whole group and discussed with a view to clarifying ideas and enriching the knowledge of all. I cannot here go into details but I am convinced from what experience I have of trying this method, tentatively and under many limitations, in the Aligarh

Training College, that it can be utilized very successfully with the advanced university students.

If the completion of a piece of research, *i.e.*, creative intellectual activity, is made an essential part of all higher education—demanded for all Master's and Doctor's degrees not only in Science but also in Arts—it will have a very stimulating influence on the quality of our University Education. When a proper and suitable subject is chosen and work is intelligently organized round it, when seminar discussions are made an occasion for the clarification and modification of views and tentative hypotheses, when the professor's own knowledge is placed at the disposal of the student, there is much greater intellectual development and quickening of worthy and abiding interests than is possible under the present conditions. Dr. Stanley Hall, in his "Life and Confessions of a Psychologist" has very convincingly advocated this point, for in his experience, with the preparation of a successful thesis, a student has often found himself, *i.e.*, discovered in what direction his powers can be most profitably utilized. Thus there is also extremely valuable *moral* discipline involved in research which is hardly possible through ordinary

instruction. It motivates reading and study and confers on it a certain unity in diversity which is extremely fruitful. It develops a respect for truth, an objectivity of judgment, a strength of purpose, a permanence of worthy interests and a capacity to sift and evaluate data intelligently. Through it are provided valuable opportunities for co-operative intellectual activity, thoughtfully organized, and when work has been completed the result is an increased sense of confidence in self, a greater measure of initiative and resourcefulness and the joyous realization of the capacity to do independent intellectual work.

IV

I have been dealing so far with one great objective of the university—the creation and interpretation of new knowledge. I have now to deal very briefly with two other important functions of the university. One of them is *social and national service through the propagation of knowledge outside the university*. This represents the extension of the university to the people, the attempt to expand its usefulness beyond its four walls to the whole community which maintains and supports it. As an enthusiast aptly put it, "If you

cannot bring all the people into the university, *take the university to the people.*" Discussing this University Extension Movement, Draper* says:—

"The universities are like gardens within walls, and a fragrance comes over the walls and is wafted into the world beyond; and there arises in the world a desire for more of that from which the fragrance comes—more knowledge, more fellowship in the pursuit of knowledge, and more of that ethical grace which is found to accompany fellowship in the pursuit of knowledge."

In England and other educationally advanced countries various methods have been and are being tried to bring the university into greater and more intimate contact with the life of the people and to make the results of its work available in popular form for the mass of the people. Such universities extend their sphere of influence and utility by organizing correspondence courses, public lectures, summer schools, educational conferences, slum-reform expeditions . . . They carry on "extension work," as it is called, in various centres, groups of students and teachers

* University Extension—a Survey of fifty years.

“adopting” certain villages or areas. They publish studies on current problems of general interest, edit classics and text-books, and generally make useful knowledge popular and available for all. Tutorial classes are organized in various towns for people who require special courses of lectures in any branch of theoretical or practical knowledge. In the Summer Conferences, outside people—labourers, mechanics, men in the services—are brought within the fold of the university environment and given a brief but valuable experience of residence, study and comradeship in these cultural surroundings. Our universities have an immense scope of work in these and other directions of social service, because they have to play their part in re-building a practically shattered fabric of national life, to combat illiteracy and ignorance, to fight against false prejudices and narrow-mindedness, to provide readable literature and to raise the standard of people’s thought and interests.

Work of this kind is mutually useful for the university and the public—for the public, because it would exercise a refining, cultural influence on their life, for the university, because it would strengthen its hold on the affection and respect of

the people. Moreover, the university professors and students, who are brought into close contact with social realities in this way, gain a depth of experience and a keenness of insight wanting before. Having to teach non-academic minds they are compelled to clarify their own thoughts and analyse and understand more thoroughly what may have been rather superficially acquired knowledge. Thus through various extension activities, the university can enrich at one stroke both its own life and the life of the community.

I come now to the third and last aim of university education, namely, Vocational Training. I have already made a few remarks about the narrow interpretation that is being given to this objective in modern times and pointed out its dangers in so far as it tends to lower the dignity of university work. These people imagine that the business of the university is to train its students for the various "services," and to win the approval of the ignorant multitude by sending specially coached students to compete in such examinations as those of the Staff Selection Board, the Indian and Provincial Services, etc., no matter

* See also Chapters VIII and XIV.

what the price may be that the university has to pay for this adulteration of its ideal.* We must remember in this connection that the University seeks to liberalize even professional and technical training by placing it in a broad, humanistic context, by making the worker appreciate the wider purposes and connections of his activity, by giving him an insight into the social utility of his work—which is not merely an ethical gain but also brings a gain in technical efficiency. This is the point wherein lies for certain purposes the superiority of the university over a technical school or workshop, even though the latter may, technically speaking, be more efficient. The present tendency, on the other hand, makes “liberal education” narrow and cramped, because what seems apparently to be liberal education is given in a narrowly vocational spirit. Thus are the glories of literature, the inspiration of history, the sense of power and mystery which lies in the reverent study of science sacrificed—sacrificed to the demands of a curriculum which must be “useful,” and methods which should, with the minimum of difficulty, enable the students somehow to get through examinations. In our hurry, we have no time to “give due thought to

the spangled heavens in our teaching of astronomy, to the teeming earth in our teaching of geography or to the life of man in our teaching of history.”* It is the sacrifice of the kernel for the husk, of the living spirit for dead matter, and the Universities must guard themselves against this narrow vocationalism.

In the wider sense, however, which I have above suggested, Vocational Training is part of their work. The demands and complications of modern life require special training for people in various branches of public work. This increasing specialization of modern civilization has thrust this aim on our attention and if properly envisaged, the demand is to be welcomed. We need trained men not only as engineers and physicians and civil servants, but also men who know history, men who are conversant with social, political and economic sciences, or with physical or biological sciences, men who can understand and interpret the ideals and expression of literature, men who have perspective and can “measure the present by the past and by the understanding and logic of organized knowledge.” And where

* Dewey: Democracy and Education.

can these men be trained better than at the universities, which are on the one hand creative centres of knowledge, and on the other attend to the heart-beats of national life? All this work, too, is vocational work, in the higher sense of the word, not directly computable perhaps in money but capable of being measured in terms of a healthier, happier, more balanced and more just life for the people. It should result in the developing of a broad outlook, of initiative, of judgment, of resourcefulness and adaptability, of the power to think, to persevere, to organize and to succeed. These are not only human and intellectual virtues but valuable technical assets which pay in the long run when every individual is called upon to play his part, not in an exclusively professional capacity, but as a man with manifold capacities and obligations.

Thus the supreme ideal of the university will always be the release of the human spirit so that it may express itself unfettered in creative activities, and, by giving new values to its age, gradually mould the world nearer to its heart's desire than it has hitherto been. Can we find a higher and dare we accept a lower ideal than this as our inspiration in university education?

CHAPTER X

ARE OUR TRAINING COLLEGES A FAILURE?

TEACHERS' Training Colleges are in rather a curious predicament in this country. On the one hand, the regulations laid down by the Departments of Public Instruction demand that all or most of the teachers employed in Government or aided schools must be trained and there is consequently an increasing number of candidates knocking for admission—often in vain!—at the gates of the Training Colleges. On the other hand, in the mind of the public, of educated people belonging to an older educational tradition when teachers did not receive any professional training, and sometimes of the teachers themselves there is a lingering doubt whether this training is worth while, whether the one or two years which students are compelled to spend at these institutions repay the time and money spent on them and whether educational work has, as a whole, benefited and improved as a result of this provision for professional training. I propose to discuss here

this persistent and annoying problem which is always cropping up in different forms before all those who have anything to do with the training of teachers—namely, whether our Training Colleges are really successful in their avowed objectives and whether these objectives, in themselves, are worthy of approval.

We are all familiar with the manifold charges that are levelled against the Training Colleges by all sorts of people—and not infrequently by the very teachers who have had the benefit (or otherwise!) of this training. An analysis of these will help to clarify the situation. One very common complaint is that the training given in these colleges is not related closely enough to the actual conditions of school work and when trained teachers pass out of their portals (often heaving a long sigh of relief!) they are not able to translate their educational theories and principles into practice. Their knowledge of theory and of school-room practice remains confined in two water-tight compartments, instead of mutually enriching and interpenetrating each other. Soon, too soon, after being caught up in the grindstone of the school routine they fall into the traditional, uninspiring methods of teaching

and fail to bring any fresh life and vitality into their schools. Very often the teachers themselves complain that all their knowledge of theory laboriously imparted and laboriously acquired in college, has been 'useless' because they cannot, under existing school conditions, utilize it in a practical manner. The complaint takes a more general form when the question is asked: what have the Training Colleges contributed to the improvement of school education? How have they made it more effective or more joyous or more full of immediate meaning for the children? Have they succeeded in creating amongst their students a proper attitude towards their profession? Is it not a fact that the professional education of a large majority of teachers stops as soon as they leave the college? Instead of seeking to equip themselves ever more perfectly for their important vocation, are they not content to vegetate and fossilize, never caring to read even a single new book on the subjects that they teach or on the general problems of education? What justification, then, can one offer of these Training Colleges?

We cannot deny that there is a great deal of truth in these allegations and the Training Colleges

must accept the greater part, though not the whole, of this blame. The divorce of theory from practice is one of the most serious defects of Training College education and, unless it is removed, its effectiveness will continue to be very questionable indeed. The reason for this is not far to seek. There are very few colleges which have the right type—often any type—of demonstration schools attached to them, where teachers might work out educational principles and methods for the benefit of their students. The result is that the ideas of the students remain vague and they are unable to visualize them as directive forces in school instruction and, what is worse, even their professors often lack that clarity of vision and self-confidence which can only come when their theories have been put to the touchstone of practice and found workable. Practice and theory must both be visualized as growing entities: theory illuminating practice and pointing the direction of its progress; practice constantly modifying, reinterpreting and strengthening theory, and checking its tendency to become mere airy persiflage. It is, therefore, essential that every Training College should have under its direct control a properly equipped Demonstration School,

conducted on experimental lines and working on methods and principles advocated in the lecture rooms of the college. If students in training have had the personal, first-hand experience of these methods in actual use, if in the course of their teaching practice they have helped to run the school on these lines, there is a much greater likelihood of their acquiring an experimental attitude towards their work and of establishing, in later life, a fruitful interaction between their theory and practice. Also when they have once tasted the joy of creative endeavour, they will be impelled to continue for themselves the process of their education, ever seeking to add to their knowledge and didactic capacities.

In so far, however, as the conditions of work prevailing in schools are positively antagonistic to work on new lines, the responsibility lies not on the Training Colleges but on the schools and their authorities—whether Managers, Head Masters or the Departmental officers. Even the most enthusiastic of teachers, with the keenest sense of duty, find their spirits damped when they meet discouraging conditions in the schools and find their colleagues and their authorities passively disapproving, if not actively ridiculing, all

attempts at reform as useless fads. The only remedy for this situation is to organize the progressive educational forces in the country in such a way that they may derive strength and inspiration from their association with one another and fight the forces of reaction and obscurantism. We cannot here discuss how this is to be done. But in this work, too, the Training Colleges can and should play a part and some machinery should be devised which will enable them to keep in touch with their ex-students and to guide them in their work. Under the new scheme for the training of teachers in Germany, a teacher is not certified as being a *pucca* teacher unless, after completing his training course, he puts in three years of supervised and approved teaching in some well-organized school. During this period he remains in a kind of *status pupillari*, working under the guidance of some really competent and experienced teacher of his school and receiving occasionally the benefit of supervision and inspection by the inspectors of the Ministry of Education and the professors of the Training College belonging to that locality. In certain states in America, teachers are not confirmed and given their annual increments unless they can

show that they have been carrying on, at least, a certain minimum of professional studies and attending refresher courses and, in various ways, improving their professional efficiency. Such checks are very useful—especially when they are not made merely formal and red-tapish, and some scheme can be devised whereby the emphasis is laid not on complying with certain technical forms but on securing conditions that will put a premium on experiment, on growth and development, on a continuous recreation by the teachers of their culture and teaching ability. The Training Colleges should, therefore, be utilized to exercise general supervision over the schools situated in the neighbourhood, to encourage teachers, especially their own alumni, to improve their teaching and to conduct educational experiments and, generally speaking, place their advice and resources at the disposal of those who may require them. Unless we can in some such way “follow up” the work of the teachers and see how they are actually shaping out after they have been released from the somewhat artificial environment of the Training Colleges, we shall always be faced with the danger of even trained teachers sliding back into easy and lazy ways, indulging in cheap

sneers against their new and more enthusiastic colleagues and using their experience, not as an asset adding to their control and insight and directing the course of their further experience into ever more creative channels, but as a means for cleverly shirking work and discouraging progressive change.

On the side of their work in theory also, they have been subjected to different, often mutually, conflicting criticisms. It has been pointed out that they teach too much of theory; that they teach too little of it; that their theoretical courses should be curtailed; that there are many important things that they should, but do not, teach! We can leave such criticisms to look after one another but there is one serious and justifiable charge which challenges our attention. Our Training Colleges have been far too preoccupied with the technical aspect of their work at the expense of the human aspect. They have tended to stress method and teaching devices and skills to such an extent that students get no chance for the play of their critical intelligence on problems of aims and purposes and values. They have often missed the sight of the wood for the trees; they have failed to visualize education as a social

and cultural activity environed in the midst of a characteristic social and cultural life. The relation of the school to society and its living problems and issues has been obscured by concentrating short-sightedly on minor details and technical requirements. The shortness of time at the disposal of the colleges is possibly an explanation but not an excuse for this situation, because its unchallenged continuity indicates a wrong sense of values. In this respect, therefore, it is essential for the Training Colleges to revise their values and avoid the misfortune of the man in the cave who could see nothing of the fascinating vista around him because his vision was bounded by the four walls of his prison.

We may now sum up the situation as it presents itself after this brief analysis. The Training Colleges have failed to pull their full weight for various reasons, some of which are within, while others are beyond, their control. The effectiveness of their work in practice is seriously handicapped because they have no demonstration schools of their own and cannot work out any reliable, well-knit and properly organized technique of teaching. The result is that when their half-baked teachers are actually

face to face with school conditions, which are often very discouraging, they are not able to put the principles they have learnt into practice and soon fall into apathy—and into line—with their played-out colleagues! On the side of their theory work, they often fail to create in their students a sense of teaching as a noble vocation and to provide that broad vision which sees, in the daily routine and drudgery associated with their work, a creative activity of the highest order—the shaping of a better world through the cultivation of the best in the individuality of every child. Thus the young, well meaning but often imperfectly equipped teacher finds himself beating his head against a stone wall, without either the faith that moves mountains or the disciplined energy which blasts a way through them. How this situation is to be met has been indicated, briefly and by implication, in the course of this chapter and will be discussed in greater detail in some of the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER XI

THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS—HUMAN OR TECHNICAL?

IN the program of educational reconstruction that has to be carried out in this country, the problem of teachers' training occupies a central place. For, the ultimate success of all our educational movements and measures depends on the keenness and capacity of the teachers who are to work them out practically. It is, therefore, important that teachers, as well as those who are engaged in the work of training them for their profession, should clarify their own ideas on the subject and try to understand the aims and objectives of their activity. What is the guiding principle and the point of view that we should adopt in the education of teachers? Are they to be trained merely in the technique of class instruction and school management so as to achieve certain technical results in the domain of knowledge and skill? Or, are they to be equipped to play their part in the process of child-education, visualized as a creative and cultural activity? If

the school is to be regarded as an academic institution, self-contained and self-sufficient, with its rigidly defined scope of work and interests, the training of teachers will present one set of problems. If, however, we accept the view of education developed in the first part of this book, there will be all kinds of dynamic, social and cultural problems of national life clamouring for the teachers' attention and we cannot possibly ignore them in planning out an education suited to their needs. Those who have been responsible so far for the training of teachers in India, have been inclined to give too narrow an interpretation to their 'job.' There have been, of course, certain financial and political reasons for this policy which may be urged as a justification for what has been done, but it is high time *now* to give a new orientation to teacher training in order to meet the urgent needs of modern education. I propose in this chapter to discuss briefly some of the issues involved in this wider conception of teacher training.

Before attempting to work out the implications of this question and presenting my own point of view, I should like to make it clear that personally I do not believe in an *ultimate*

antithesis between human and technical values, that an intelligent and searching interpretation of the terms will resolve this dualism and prove them to be complementary rather than antithetical. All that is human should, in my opinion, be wide and comprehensive enough to embrace the technical and not reject it; and the technical, rightly interpreted, should subserve human ends and promote cultural values instead of setting up conflicting claims of its own. This being granted, however, we should remember that, in actual practice, a sharp distinction is drawn between the values represented by these two terms. In the Training Colleges we often come across the assertion that they are institutions for the *professional* training of teachers—with an unmistakable emphasis on the word ‘professional’ which implies that the business of these institutions is to make teachers efficient in the ‘tricks of their trade’ and not to be lured away by the specious appeal of the so-called liberal or cultural values. Actually we find Training Institutions mainly, or even exclusively, preoccupied with the technical aspect of their work to the detriment of the human aspect. It is the purpose of this chapter to make a plea for redressing this balance

and reinstating the cultural values of teacher training in their rightful place. If, in the course of this plea, I am compelled to adopt a point of view which seems to the orthodox workers in the field to savour of heresy, I can only plead the excuse of being sincerely convinced of the truth of my position.

Let us start with granting the assumption that our business is to provide *professional* training for our teachers. We are at once confronted with the question: what is the profession of teachers? Is it of the same nature as the work of the carpenter who fashions beautiful furniture out of ungainly blocks of wood, of the engineer who works the complicated mechanism of a factory machine, of an architect who constructs a habitable house out of bricks and mortar? Does he ply his trade—if we are to call it a trade—under the same conditions as many other tradesmen dealing in worldly goods? Putting the question in that form is really suggesting the obvious answer—No! The teacher is not working with bricks and mortar or wood and metals—he is working with human material, with the growing minds and personalities of young human beings. He is—to use an old-fashioned phrase—“an artist

in the souls of children." They are not passive recipients of his creative activity but react to it constantly in their peculiar, individual manner. They are, therefore, constantly reshuffling the properties of the stage and demanding of the teacher constant vigilance, wide-awakeness of interests and the sacred gift of imagination. And what is more, they are not just 'individuals' to be trained as such—they are by nature *social* and have to be educated to take their proper place in society and to play their part worthily in it—a society which has its own distinctive values and traditions, its own ethos and culture, its own view of life and its peculiar problems. They have to imbibe, as best as they may, these values and traditions—with respect, certainly, but also with critical insight. And in this process of adjustment to a world which is at once material and spiritual, in this voyage of the discovery of self, the teacher is their helpful guide. Thus we find what appeared to be just a trade opening out into what an English writer has called "a conversation with the infinite," a profession developing into a creative activity of the highest order which has to do with the shaping of human personality, which raises the teacher to the dignity

of a co-worker with God. Even as in the words of Ghalib (غالب)

آرائشِ جمال سے فارغ نہیں ہنوز
پیشِ نظر ہے آئینہ دائم نقاب میں

the Eternal Creator is ever experimenting with new forms, never completely satisfied with what is but always moving towards what is yet to be; so is the teacher engaged in the incessant creative activity of initiating the young members of the community into the best of its culture and civilization and also, through his selection and discrimination, through his emphasis and method of presentation, of reconstructing them into better forms for their benefit. No view of the teacher's position and task will be complete unless we envisage him in this light. In fact we shall not even touch the fringes of the problem unless we definitely recognize that the teacher is *not* concerned primarily with instructing children in a certain number of school subjects; his primary concern is with *the enrichment of their life-experiences* in such a way that they will realize their own powers and use them in the service of their social heritage. This is a view which postulates, on the part of teachers, the keenest

human sympathy with and understanding of child nature and an appreciation of the social and cultural strands woven in the texture of community life. How do we train him for the duties that he will have to discharge in this rôle ?

An analysis of the existing syllabuses of Training Colleges—to say nothing of Normal Schools—reveals an utter failure on their part to appreciate the true significance of this position. They are concerned mainly with method of teaching and class management, with the imparting of skill in drawing, blackboard writing and other similar processes. I do not object to the inclusion of these subjects which are important enough and cannot very well be left out. My criticism of the situation is twofold. In the first place, these subjects are presented from a very narrow and unsatisfactory point of view. Method is treated as a collection of rules and devices, as a bagful of 'tricks of the trade' which can be mechanically learnt by the teachers and mechanically applied in the class rooms. School management is likewise envisaged as an exposition of certain rules of procedure—how order is to be maintained in the class room and the machinery of school administration is to be conducted. There

is far too little play of the creative and critical intelligence on problems of aims and values which have to be realized through the teaching methods and which govern their nature and application. There is not sufficient appreciation of the truth that method is merely the psychological order or system imposed by the individual mind on growing subject matter with a view to directing the experience of the educands into ever more fruitful channels. There are, really, no specific methods of universal applicability which can be used in all situations, without an intelligent analysis of conditions and results. Likewise school management has a much wider connotation than the mere maintenance of order and discipline in the usual sense—it is the organization and guidance of the social life and activities of a community of youth in such a way that they will develop a sense of responsibility and a capacity for self-direction and learn the lesson of co-operation and social service. It is foolish to imagine that such organization of youthful life and activities is possible for a teacher without an intelligent study and appreciation of the principles that underlie, and the ideals which inspire, our social life and institutions.

Secondly, while it is true that Principles of Education and History of Education—which have essentially a cultural value—do find a place in the syllabus of post-graduate training colleges, their full value and implications are not realized. The principles of education cannot be treated as a collection of self-contained, oracular pronouncements which can guide all educational activity. Their intelligent study would reveal infinite ramifications; it would reach out into ethics and psychology and sociology and many other scientific and social studies and involve the discussion of all kinds of living, cultural problems. I realize that limitation of time and pressure of other more urgent and ‘useful’ work will be pleaded as an excuse but I cannot possibly believe that a man who has never even had an inkling of the immense cultural and national issues implicit in his work, can ever become an intelligent and inspiring teacher. The view might also be pressed that the study of these problems is really the business of the University and not of the Training College which takes in the graduates of the University after they have, presumably, received the necessary general education. This I am prepared to recognize and no one can expect the Training

Colleges to undertake the study of ethics, or sociology or psychology as such. But the study of all these subjects in our universities is too academic and formal; the knowledge that they gain from their study does not enrich their understanding of real and living issues; it is not carried over into everyday life. Therefore, even if we can postulate a theoretical knowledge of these subjects on the part of our students—and the assumption will often be wrong!—we must try and relate it to the study and understanding of educational problems which are always practical and human problems, never merely hypothetical ones. Wherever the vast frontiers of education—of the Science and Art of Education—meet these other domains of human thought, there is lawful ground for the Training Colleges to annex. And the problem of selection and time will be solved if we keep in mind the principle that our aim is not the exhaustive treatment of all or any topic but the awakening of interest and curiosity, a living realization that these wider problems do actually exist and are a standing challenge to the intelligence, the sense of duty and the spirit of conquest in the teacher. Not by way of a remarkable achievement—for it is only a beginning—

but by way of an illustration, I might refer to a beginning that has been made in this direction by the Training College with which I have the honour to be associated. We have been trying for the last few years to present Education to our students—in connection particularly with their work in the paper on Principles of Education—as an integral part of the general life of the community which is being lived in the vortex of a large number of social, intellectual, economic and political institutions, and to analyse the problems which are created by them and which give meaning and significance as well as direction to educational changes. An attempt is also made to study questions of aims and values with special reference to Indian conditions.

The History of Education, again, is not just an enumeration of the “doctrines of great educators” of the past but a study which attempts to present the problem of education in its time-dimension—to show how, under varying conditions and circumstances, people have faced and solved their special educational issues which, in their essence, have been always very much alike though they have been viewed and settled differently. It is the distinguishing mark of a

person of liberal education—and here I am using the term liberal as synonymous with human or cultural—that he is able to see the environment surrounding him in its wholeness, as representing the cumulative result of a long process of change and development. The education of a teacher cannot be liberal or human unless he can visualize the educational problems of the day as the culmination of historical causes and processes, unless he can see their interaction with, and dependence upon, the life of the community, past and present and future. Without this vision the teacher will not be able to visualize his work in its true perspective.

Now we can understand the true place of technical training. We have referred to the teacher as an artist or a craftsman and as such it is necessary that he should be a master of the technique of his profession. Without the ability to use the instruments of his creative activity with ease—without being able, for example, to draw and speak and write—he cannot practise his art with any measure of success. But the control of technique does not by itself make a person into an artist—in fact, mere perfection of technique, without the inner inspiration and the creativity of

the spirit, has often led to most dreary results in art and poetry. It exalts the letter that killeth at the expense of the spirit that keepeth alive and substitutes formalism for interest and vitality. A teacher who has a facile mastery of the technical accomplishments required for his work—understanding of the school routine, capacity for class control, ability to express himself in speech and writing, even a knowledge of the subject matter—but lacks the inner urge which can spring only from an appreciation of the deeper meaning and significance of his work is in the same unhappy position. He may work ‘efficiently’ as efficiency is blindly and unimaginatively measured; he may win the praise of the Head Masters and Inspectors and put up a good percentage of examination results. But he cannot find in his work the joy of fruitful social service or successful self-realization and he cannot leave any lasting impression of his personality on his pupils or his age. For, education is essentially a human process, a contact of a mind with a mind, of a spirit with a spirit and unless the teacher has an enriched mind and is endowed with the true culture of the spirit, he cannot successfully nourish the nascent personalities of his pupils.

The artist in him can draw his inspiration only from love of the children whom he is educating, from the realization that through his activity he is helping to unfold their life patterns as true works of art, from an understanding of the place of his work in the entire economy of human life, from the joy which all meaningful activity, carried to completion, brings in its train. His calling, like all other callings, becomes liberalized to the extent that it sets up living associations with other human interests and callings possessing abiding significance, and the more we can awaken his mind to the pulsating issues of the large and abundant life of mankind, the more we can tune his spirit to vibrate with the joys and sorrows, the achievements and failures, the interests and occupations of his fellow men, the more shall we make him a better man and consequently a better teacher.

The problem is thus seen to be widening out in its scope and implications so as to reach beyond the questions of the syllabus and the curriculum. What we demand from the teachers is not merely a knowledge of the so-called liberal studies but a liberalized attitude towards their work, a clear realization that through the exercise of the

technique of their profession they are really striving to achieve essentially human values—immediately, in the life of their pupils and, ultimately, in the life of the nation and the race. It requires, therefore, a reorientation of the whole process of training teachers, not mere patch-work changes in the syllabus. On the one hand, the curriculum must be widened in its scope to include at least an introductory study of the social, cultural and ethical problems which are intimately connected with the problems of education and which provide the background as well as the inner meaning of school programmes and school activities. On the other hand, Training Colleges must themselves be transformed into genuine centres of community life, organized on the principles of freedom and responsibility, of social co-operation and individual initiative—principles which determine the effective growth of human personality. Unless teachers have had a practical experience and realization of their principles which underlie the newer educational movements, we cannot reasonably expect that they would be either willing or able to work them out in the life of their school children. A teacher who has never been treated as a responsible human being, who

has been kept in the Training College under martinet discipline, who has never had a chance at creative self-expression or social service—how can he become a standard bearer of the “New Education” and promote free discipline or self-expression and co-operative social service amongst his pupils? It is far more likely that he may perpetuate the evils to which he has been subjected and education continue to move in a vicious circle—the rigid discipline of school life, followed by a more or less giddy time of pseudo-freedom at the University, capped by a year of formal, technical and hedge-bound professional training at a Training College where, as a rule, freedom and self-expression are as dutifully applauded in theory as they are scrupulously excluded in practice. Such teachers then, having passed through these breaking-in experiences, are placed in charge of the education of children and adolescents, and no wonder education continues to mark time and there is, on every side, a sense of utter futility and waste, ‘heavy as frost and deep almost as life.’

What is the remedy for this situation? Theoretically it is not difficult to indicate and it has, in fact, been pointed out in this chapter by

implication. But its practical application requires imagination and vision and an intelligent grasp of educational problems in their life-context. The teaching of skills is comparatively easy and, given normal conditions, technical proficiency is not difficult to acquire. But the education of a teacher's human personality demands infinite tact and infinite patience as does the completion of every great work of art. Short-cut methods, impatience to achieve measurable results, cynical indifference to great human values are inimical to the spirit of true art, and unless the training of teachers is envisaged by its organizers as a creative art, subject to the conditions which favour all artistic activity, we shall be wasting our resources on tremendous trifles instead of concentrating them on issues of permanent and vital significance.

CHAPTER XII

MAJOR PROBLEMS IN TEACHER TRAINING IN INDIA

In the preceding chapter on the Education of Teachers, I have tried to present a broad, humanistic conception of the process of training teachers, choosing the term 'Education' with the object of emphasizing its wider and more inclusive scope as compared with the term 'training.' In the present chapter, I propose to narrow down and particularize my scope and examine some of the outstanding issues and problems which have to be faced by those who are engaged in the task of working out a curriculum and a technique for Training Colleges. It is obviously impossible to do anything like full justice to them in the course of a single chapter. But, while the details are numerous and complicated, there are a few major problems and difficulties which are common to, and beset, all secondary training institutions and which require concerted and clearly thought-out action on their part. There are, no doubt, local differences which may require a change of

emphasis in this or that province but the broad and fundamental features of the situation possess enough similarity to invite the consideration of the picture as a whole.

Let us try at the outset to recollect that the task of training teachers is a very difficult and complicated process and nowhere do we feel more keenly the force of the remark that Art is long—very long, indeed!—and time is fleeting—far too fast! Within the brief space of nine months the Training Colleges are expected—without the aid of a magician's wand, which is not part of their equipment—to transform raw, inexperienced graduates, often lacking all sense of vocation and vocational bias, into interested and responsible craftsmen, qualified to practise the most difficult and delicate of human crafts. Or, worse still, they are entrusted with the task of changing completely the mental and emotional habitudes of old and time-worn teachers who have been carrying on a routine grind in their schools for years. The result naturally is that a majority of the fresh graduates, who are not to the manner born, are hardly able to do anything more than master the mechanics of the profession; while the older teachers scarcely begin to look beyond their

traditional grooves when they are taken away from the Training College. The creation of healthy and permanent mental and emotional attitudes, the broadening of the outlook, the cultivation of a sense of professional dignity and devotion—all these are fruits of leisure and time which are denied to our teachers, condemned as they are to rush breathlessly and scrappily through their work. The primary object of a course of training should be, in the words of a contributor to the Times Educational supplement “to widen the students’ view of his subject and quicken his spiritual and intellectual interest in its manifold range and purpose. If he enters upon his first appointment in this temper and if he brings to it also a love of youth and a resolve to get the best out of it then he will, under careful guidance, soon feel his way into practical technicalities, and curricula, schemes, methods and discipline will fall into their place.” But this is just what the Training Colleges are unable to provide, even when the understanding and the will are there; for, they are forced, by the great pressure on their limited time, to adopt short-cut methods and concentrate on tangible and immediately applicable ‘tricks of the trade’

instead of the cultivation of the more permanent and fruitful values. An extension of the period of training is, in my opinion, a condition precedent to all reforms and improvements.

Given greater time—or even without it—we must face the highly important problem of curriculum reconstruction. The present rather meagre and formal curriculum is, like the curriculum of all other institutions, an importation from the west and has not been formulated with reference to the special needs and conditions of the Indian people and the Indian teachers. It attempts to give the students some idea of educational history and developments in the west; it is preoccupied with meticulous details and analysis of methods and school management. But it is not related to the important issues and problems of national life and does not give teachers a sympathetic understanding and insight into the elements of national culture. A teacher's work, by its very nature, has far-flung ramifications into many and varied branches of human thought and activity—into psychology, philosophy and ethics and into all the social, political and intellectual movements of his age. He cannot discharge his duties, in any real sense,

unless he possesses a finely-strung sensitiveness to all large human interests and movements to which he has to orientate his students and he must realize, in a general way, how the ordinary questions of method and discipline that engage him every day stir deep, ethical and philosophical issues. Guided by a narrowly utilitarian objective and constantly pressed for time, the Training Colleges have failed to make any adequate provision to attune the minds and spirits of their students to these great social and cultural movements. The result is that they are unable to see their own cycle of activity in its proper setting with reference to other great human activities, and education has become an isolated and narrowly circumscribed routine procedure instead of being what it really should be—a movement for the creative release of intelligence, sympathy and appreciation, opening out in the minds of the educands new windows on the world and giving them progressively a more and more enriched understanding and control of it. It is true that the Training Colleges cannot, by themselves, adequately deal with this problem; they require the active co-operation of the universities where their graduates receive education. But my

criticism against them is that they have not even realized the need for a new point of view on this problem.

On the practical side of their work, the colleges are most seriously handicapped by the absence of any real experimental and demonstration schools where the teachers of the college and the school, working in co-operation with teachers-in-training, might progressively work out new methods and schemes of work. The situation has a very undesirable repercussion all round. The Training Colleges do not get any substantial opportunity of putting their theories and methods into practice and their teaching consequently lacks that touch with life and reality which only successful, practical experience can give. And, what is worse, that living contact between theory and practice which alone can secure a progressive modification of the former and an illumination of the latter is irrevocably broken. On the other hand, the work of the schools goes on along its traditional grooves, not enriched at all by the stimulating contact and the researches of the Training College. But the worst sufferers in this unfortunate triangle are the teachers-in-training, who see no actual demonstration of schemes and

methods which they study in English and American books, which naturally deal with them in the light of their own special conditions. Their entire pedagogical knowledge is thus vitiated by a gnawing sense of unreality and, not infrequently, they look upon all 'new' methods as so many impracticable fads. It is no wonder, therefore, that when they find a footing in the ordinary schools, they follow the path of least resistance and, instead of attempting new experiments and improvements, cynically revert to the easy and defective ways of their older colleagues.

This raises the closely allied problem of how the Training Colleges are to keep themselves in touch with their old students who are apt to slide back in their teaching, soon after their contact with the college is broken and the forces of conservatism, strongly entrenched in schools, have closed in on them. As pointed out in a preceding Chapter, under the new teacher training scheme developed in Germany a few years ago, every newly trained teacher is expected to serve for about three years as an apprentice-teacher under the general guidance and supervision of some very competent, senior teacher and his work is from time to time, inspected and discussed by the

Inspectors as well as the Professors of the Training College located in that area. It is after this long and supervised apprenticeship that he gains his full status as a teacher, qualified to carry on his honourable craft. This illustration not only shows how a Training College can, under certain conditions, keep in touch with its students; it also gives us the highly significant idea that it is the business of a Training College to assume educational leadership in the region which it mainly serves. The schools of the area must learn to look up to it as a source of inspiration and a centre of educational research to which they can refer their special problems and difficulties for advice, much as the well-organized industries of the west refer their special technical problems to their respective research institutes. This demands not only a progressive educational policy and outlook on the part of these colleges but also a much closer contact and co-ordination between them and the work of the schools. There are difficulties in the way of such an arrangement in India. As one associated with a University Training College which does not enjoy even the small mercies vouchsafed to Government Training Colleges in this respect, I am only too conscious of these

difficulties. But I am convinced that unless some vital and living contact like this is established between the training college and the various schools of the area, its work will continue to wear an appearance of unreality. Given such a contact, it will not only have a beneficial reaction on the work of the schools but also provide for the training colleges a pragmatic test of their theories and ideas without which they are apt to remain very much in the air. Moreover, by trying to apply their ideas gradually to a large school system and not to one or two isolated, possibly specially favoured schools, they will demonstrate the general usefulness and practicability of their theories and go a long way to break down the present attitude of scepticism towards their work. What Washburne, for example, did in all the schools under him at Winnetka, could be attempted by any keen and progressive training college in all the schools of the locality associated with it in an educational and intellectual comradeship. Moreover, the methods and schemes of work which they develop after practical experience of conditions in all types of schools—large and small, rural and urban, rich and poor, progressive and backward—

will be far more useful than easy-chair theories with which they have at present to remain content as their permanent stock in trade.

This brings me to another rather neglected aspect; the curious anomaly which exists between educational ideas and principles theoretically advocated in training colleges and those that actually underlie their work as educational institutions. There is much talk in educational circles—most of all in training institutions—of the ‘new education’ and of the many ideas and movements woven into its variegated texture: freedom, initiative, leadership, community life, social motives and the like. Teachers-in-training are expected to assimilate the essence of these ideas by some process of direct intuition from books and then to make them living realities in their own schools. We have failed to apply our favourite principle of Learning by Doing nearer home in our own work. It is impossible to realize the full significance of any important and pregnant conception like freedom or self-activity or co-operative work without an actual experience of working under conditions which they postulate. What we imperatively need is a freeing of these colleges from that strict regimentation and

mechanical control of teachers' life and activities which obtain there, and their re-organization into free and active 'communities' where teachers would work under the same conditions and stimuli that we desire to establish in our new and progressive schools. Otherwise the teachers, educated and trained in a cramped, unfree environment will tend to perpetuate the vicious circle into which they were caught and carry on the wrong traditions of their own education into their respective schools.

Finally, I should like to refer to an administrative problem of great difficulty which confronts all training colleges: the selection of candidates for training. So far the matter has been dealt with very haphazardly and, since the supply of aspiring candidates and trained teachers in the past did not exceed the demand, the situation was not so acute and critical as it is today. Now there is, on the one hand, a much greater rush of candidates to the available training colleges, and, on the other, the openings available are not sufficient to absorb all qualified and trained teachers. In some provinces, e.g., the Punjab, the saturation point has been definitely reached and admissions to training institutions have been

considerably curtailed. In fact we may take it that, generally speaking, until there is a new, large-scale drive forward in education, trained teachers will be required mainly for the normal replacement and renewal of the existing personnel. The problem of selection, therefore, becomes particularly important in the interests of individuals as well as the teaching profession, and colleges can no longer remain content with a policy of haphazard admissions, trusting to luck to bring about a stable adjustment of demand and supply. They have to ensure, by conscious planning and endeavour, the provision of a steady stream of well-qualified teachers to meet the existing and growing needs of their respective areas. I can refer only very briefly to the implications of the situation.

It is essential that, in co-operation with the Department of Public Instruction, they should from time to time—say on a five-year basis—carry out a regional survey of the personnel needs of the schools in the area and plan out their admission policy with reference to the likely demand. To relieve the existing pressure on the available seats, they will have to institute short, intensive courses in teaching for the elder and

more experienced teachers who are required under the existing rules to receive training but often fail to secure admission into colleges. By attending such courses, designed not with a view to achieving any theoretical completeness but to give help and guidance where they are most needed, they will add to their professional efficiency and status and will ensure the security of their tenure. For any further progress in their professional work, the increased association of training colleges with schools that we have postulated above and the institution of refresher courses will provide adequate facilities and encouragement. This large section of candidates being thus accounted for and eliminated, the business of the colleges will be to see that only the most likely and qualified teachers are admitted. For this purpose it would be necessary to develop a more effective and adequate technique of selection than the rough and ready methods at present in vogue. When I speak of technique I do not, of course, mean the devising of any mechanical, fool-proof measuring-stick that will leave out of account the elements of personality and character which are, after all, even more important in this profession than intellectual and scholastic equipment. But

it is obviously possible to improve the present haphazard methods of selection so as to gain a fuller idea of the psychological and moral make-up of the intending teachers. But to obtain the best possible results it is necessary to go further and try to give a professional bias to the university studies of these candidates so as to eliminate the possibility, so common at present, of their coming to the college with the most curious assortment of miscellaneous knowledge, unrelated to the needs of their prospective profession. In a sense it is true that all knowledge is grist to the teacher's mill but there are, obviously, certain combinations of subjects which are likely to be more helpful than others in the theoretical and practical work of the training college. This vocational bias can be given, partly through a better selection of subjects in the university before coming to the training college and partly, as discussed elsewhere, through the introduction of Education as an optional subject for the Degree examination. The latter proposal will not only be of help to intending teachers but is also intrinsically desirable, as the cultural value of a well-planned two years' course in education is certainly as great as that of History or Philosophy

or any other traditional studies. These problems cannot be faced and tackled by any college in isolation. Some of them require, by their very nature, concerted action on the part of all the colleges concerned; all require a joint and careful effort to work out the implications of the proposals suggested. Will the Training Colleges in India boldly meet the challenge of this acute situation?

CHAPTER XIII

PRACTICE TEACHING IN TRAINING COLLEGES

TEACHERS' Training Colleges in all parts of the country suffer from the uncomfortable feeling that the experience of practical teaching which they provide for their students is very ineffective and artificial and many experiments have been tried, with varying measures of success, to overcome the circumstances which handicap their work in this direction. Some of the difficulties are implicit in the nature of the situation and will continue so long as the present method of training teachers in certain distinct and separate institutions remains unaltered. There are others which are due either to local causes or to lack of clear thinking on the part of those who organize the work of training. The object of this chapter is a consideration of these latter difficulties and how they may be overcome. By way of giving concreteness to the discussion, I shall discuss the problem with special reference to the general

scheme of practice teaching as it obtains at the University Training College, Aligarh, and the ideas underlying it. Before doing so, however, it seems necessary to point out, briefly, certain conditions which are necessary for the effective and successful organization of practice teaching because their understanding will guide us in evaluating actual procedures and suggestions.

Firstly, to quote from the *Aligarh Training College Record* (1928-29), 'We can get the best out of our teachers and give them genuine experience only when their conditions of work approximate as closely as possible to actual school-room conditions and are not modified very much by artificial arrangements.'

Secondly, the teaching practice should provide opportunities both for the acquirement of the ordinary technique of class instruction and class management and for the free exercise of the teacher's personality in chalking out new methods of work and teaching.

Thirdly, there should be a vital and stimulating contact between the teacher's work in theory and in practice. They should mutually enrich one another—theory finding application and gaining practical meaning through school teaching,

and practice being improved daily with increased insight in theory. This also requires occasional demonstration lessons by members of the staff to demonstrate in practice what they have been theoretically exhorting their students to do—a somewhat exacting task !

Fourthly, teachers should have opportunities not only for teaching certain classes but also for coming into contact with the wider aspects of school life—games, social activities, general organization of school work

Finally, they should observe and criticize the teaching of others and be trained in methods of self-criticism, leading to progressive improvement.

I shall now describe briefly the system of teaching practice in the Aligarh Training College and then try to evaluate and criticize it with reference to the aims and objects in view.

1. Our teaching practice covers at present :

(a) A preliminary period of ten days' teaching practice for one period daily in each of the two subjects chosen. During this period every teacher receives full-time supervision by a member of the staff.

(b) One month's continuous teaching practice in the subjects chosen, every teacher teaching at

least two periods a day. There is very frequent but not daily supervision.

(c) Extra lessons arranged for weak teachers or teachers who desire to specialize in some school subjects.

2. During the teaching practice weeks, regular periods are provided for the discussion in groups of lesson-notes and supervisor's remarks.

3. Teachers are required to observe and write down criticisms of lessons given by their class-fellows. They also put down in their lesson notebooks criticism of their own lessons, before studying the supervisor's remarks.

4. 'Criticism lessons' are given by all the teachers in turn and they are discussed and criticized by the whole class under the guidance of a member of the staff.

5. In observation books, specially prepared, they are required to note down their observations under the following heads:

(a) Criticism of all the lessons observed.

(b) An analysis of the school time-table with detailed criticism.

(c) A plan of the school building and a discussion of its adequacy from the point of view

of sanitation as well as the total activities of the school.

(d) Copying out of the departmental and school syllabuses in their selected subjects and criticism and suggestions for improvement.

(e) General organization of school work in the practising schools—games, medical reports, parental co-operation, vocational training, outdoor activities and social life. This last takes the form of a regular report of school work and furnishes useful information—and sometimes useful suggestions—about the various schools in the locality. It also throws light on the special difficulties which beset the ‘pupil teacher’ as he is often called, a title which sums up his curious position in the school.

I have made a study and analysis of the criticisms made by the students against the system of teaching practice, partly in the course of these reports, and partly in answer to a direct questionnaire on the subject. I give below the main criticisms because they are, after all, more valuable than criticisms from outside.

1. The presence of the supervisor and the class teacher in the class-room is a hindrance to the free expression of personality and exercise of

control by the apprentice teacher. This complaint is made by already experienced teachers who find no difficulty in maintaining discipline, or by fresh young teachers with a winning or commanding personality who do not feel the need of outside help and are able to establish pleasant relations with the class from the very outset.

2. The occasional absence of the supervisor and the regular class teacher from the room leads to disturbance and mischief amongst the boys. This solicitude for the presence of a higher authority is obviously confined to those who lack the natural gift of discipline and who, by their apparent nervousness, invite ragging and mischief on the part of the boys.

3. Differences in the point of view and the favourite methods of the various supervisors lead to confusion, because they advocate different methods of dealing with the lessons.

4. The daily writing of notes of lessons is a tedious and monotonous business which the more intelligent teachers, at least, find irksome.

5. The schoolboys' attitude towards these 'pupil teachers' is not the normal attitude of the pupil towards his regular teacher. Some of them pine for permission to inflict punishment on

offenders—but pine in vain! They feel that ‘realistic’ conditions of work are lacking.

6. They often complain that it is not possible to finish the portions assigned to them by the class teacher or headmaster if they follow the elaborate methods advocated by the Training College.

7. They deplore the lack of suitable textbooks and rapid reading books, as well as other apparatus and appliances, which handicaps them in their schemes of teaching. The apparatus available in the Training College cannot, of course, suffice for fifty students teaching at a time.

Let me point out briefly how we try to meet this criticism wherever possible. During the preliminary terms of teaching practice, we arrange daily supervision, because we feel that not only the inexperienced, hesitant teacher stands to gain by it, but also the experienced teacher who is a little too apt to move along his set grooves. Later, during the one month’s teaching practice, one or two supervisors have to divide their time amongst all the teachers practising in a certain school. Thus only periodic supervision is possible and they take care to devote more time to the weaker cases, *i.e.*, those who are weak either in power of

discipline or in the technique of teaching. The better teachers are left more and more to shift for themselves. But it is beyond human ingenuity—given the present conditions and a training course of nine months—to devise any method to reproduce exactly the ordinary school conditions.

We consider it useful to let a teacher have the benefit of the criticism and guidance of several supervisors because each one of them has some characteristic contribution to make. One may make particularly useful suggestions about methods; another may emphasize the element of personality; a third may throw lucid light on the problem of class discipline. Moreover, there is no universally approved method for meeting each pedagogical situation. Every teacher is out on a voyage of discovery. Such a voyage can have no set pattern. His own temperament, the psychology of children, local and temporal conditions, nature of the subject-matter—all these introduce complicating factors, and the teacher should welcome and try to utilize various suggestions and points of view in dealing with his particular situation, provided that his own common sense remains the guide. When, however, there are marked differences of opinion about a *specific*

point amongst the supervisors, a discussion at the staff meeting often clarifies the problem.

Likewise, we insist at first on the writing of detailed notes of lessons daily—without, however, prescribing a definite pattern, *e.g.*, the five Herbartian steps—but later we permit and encourage the teachers to make movements and topics and series of lessons the unit of their notes. Thus the teacher may plan out his notes, say for a whole week on a topic like the Reign of Akbar, or Influence of Climate on the Life of the People, or the Story of Hamlet. The more confident teachers take advantage of this suggestion, while others adopt it in the modified form of writing out every day brief suggestive notes only to indicate points of special emphasis. Still others, timid souls, stick to the safe, if humdrum, method of writing full daily notes. We do try to lessen this dependance on notes, but respect individual limitations.

There is no effective remedy for the sense of artificiality in the whole arrangement or for the lack of suitable equipment in schools. We try as far as possible to let the teacher take entire charge of the class and the supervisors never interrupt him during the course of the lesson,

except in very extreme cases. Again, it is difficult to get the idea out of the schoolboys' minds that their teacher is on his trial and that the college supervisor is noting defects in his teaching. We are beginning to try, however, a new method for testing the success of the teacher in his work. Instead of concentrating on his lesson-notes and the improvement which he is making in his method and technique, we try to find how much *the class* has improved as a result of his teaching, testing it two or three times during the long period of teaching practice. Thus the teacher's attention is transferred to some extent from himself to his pupils, he loses some of his excessive self-consciousness and begins to take interest in such things as written work and directed study. The class, too, would realize that it has to undergo an examination at the hands of a higher authority and assume a more business-like air.

Then there is the problem of 'ragging.' In the university school at Aligarh we have a number of particularly bright and intelligent boys belonging to good families from all parts of India. These are also, some of them at any rate, prone to 'rag' any teacher who is very nervous or suburban or provincial in his speech

and manner. If this ragging is kept within limits, it is useful for the teacher because it tests his mettle. If he has any personality and humour, he is able to make himself felt, and recognized after a couple of days' good-natured contest. But if he is utterly powerless in such a situation—why, he deserves to go to the wall! Moreover, experience has shown that if the teacher can create an impression of sincerity and genuine interest in his work or of strength or skill in any department of school activities, he quickly wins the respect and attention of the class. I remember how a student of the training college once scored a century against a fairly strong cricket eleven of his practising school—he never had any difficulty about discipline in his class after that memorable day!

The problem of practice teaching, like all other problems connected with the training of teachers in India, is rendered very difficult because of the short session of nine months available for the purpose. During this short period there are so many things to be done—imparting a knowledge of the theory and history of education as of method of teaching and discipline; training in certain forms of skill like drawing, handiwork,

phonetics, physical drill; practice of teaching and experience of school organization; and, above all, the formation of a certain *attitude* of mind towards their life-work. Deducting the number of holidays, the period of preparation leave and a preliminary period of lecturing and discussion of methods before these teachers can be let loose on the school, the Colleges have barely a period of four to five months at our disposal. The number of schools and of the classes available imposes a further limitation on us which is accentuated by the fact that only a limited number of supervisors can be provided by the Training College. The average teacher in a high school in England is usually competent to give helpful suggestions and directions to students teaching in his class and thus the problem of supervision is eased. This facility is denied to most Training Colleges in India, because the teachers of practising schools cannot be trusted to do this work efficiently. They are either untrained or have been trained in methods which are out-of-date or have failed to keep their knowledge and enthusiasm alive—hence it is idle to look up to them as possible sources of inspiration.

There is a further difficulty which is not

perhaps universal, but it is very real wherever it exists. This centres round the relation of the Training College to its practising schools. Where, as at some Government Training Colleges, the principal of the college is also the head of the main practising school and has all the powers of inspection, appointments, dismissals and general organization, work would usually go on smoothly, although there might be difficulties with other practising schools. But in some other places as at Aligarh or Benares the University school—which is the main practising school—is an independent institution, directly under the control of the university, and the head of the Training College has no legal or administrative hold over it. There is a great deal to be said about the autonomy of a school as a self-contained educational institution, but a Training College cannot demonstrate educational experiments and ideas in a practical manner unless it has complete control over, and full responsibility for, at least one practising school where the students may attempt, without undue interference, to work out their methods and ideas.

What then is the line of change for Training Colleges in India which would ensure a reasonably

effective system of practice teaching for intending teachers? Various makeshifts are being tried and suggested all over India, but they do not solve the basic difficulties. What is needed urgently is a lengthening of the period of training, a session's course being entirely insufficient. This may either be done by making it a two years' course—a step which requires joint action on the part of all the Training Colleges—or the introduction of Education as an optional subject for the B.A. degree in all the universities. In the case of the first alternative, students would get sufficient breathing time to assimilate what they have been studying and they would be able to work longer in schools. If the second alternative were adopted and the scheme properly organized, theoretical work would be mostly covered in the B.A. and attention would be concentrated on practice in the final year of training. It may be pointed out here that the cultural value of education as a degree subject will certainly not be less than, say, that of history, philosophy or mathematics. Students who desired to take up the teaching profession would be required to take it as one of their degree subjects.

Secondly, each training college should have

under its complete control a well-equipped and properly staffed practising school which should serve as a model of efficiency and vitalized teaching to all the schools in the locality and where the staff of the Training College might put their theories and methods into practice. Divorce of Training College staff from actual teaching and school-room problems is extremely undesirable and can only be removed if they are put in charge of the various departments of the school. In such a school, it would also be possible to reproduce more accurately realistic conditions for teachers under training.

The system of examinations has also an important bearing on the success of practice teaching. I have no doubt that in assessing the value of a teacher, his entire record of teaching throughout the session should be taken into consideration. The two final lessons, given before the Board of Examiners, do not provide a fair test of the many-sided capacity required of a teacher. It is the honest, efficient and steady work done from day to day and the improvement made by the boys under the stimulus of the teacher's influence and personality that determine his quality as a teacher. And in assessing it, regard

should be paid, as we actually try to do, to each one of the following factors:

1. Technical efficiency and knowledge of the subject-matter.
2. Capacity for improvement.
3. Personality, especially in its dynamic aspect, *i.e.*, its capacity to set boys thinking and working in right earnest.
4. Honesty and perseverance in the discharge of the duties assigned.

An external examiner is perhaps, on the whole, desirable, not so much to help place the teachers in an order of merit as to ensure that a certain uniformity of standard will prevail in various Training Colleges.

It now remains to add that training in drawing and blackboard work should form, as it actually forms in this Training College, an essential part of teachers' work. It is true that under ordinary conditions, a teacher does not make use of so many beautiful diagrams, models and illustrations as is done in 'tamasha' lessons at the colleges, but these lessons have their value. It is good for the harassed, routine-ridden teacher to have had an experience of the various types of illustrations which can be used in school lessons.

Moreover he can, during his vacation and his spare time, gradually get together a number of illustrations which may be used from time to time as occasion arises. And in any case:—

'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all!

CHAPTER XIV

THIS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

I MUST preface what I have to say with an apology for including the frivolous demonstrative adjective, *this*, in the title of the chapter, reminding some of the readers, as it might, of its somewhat slighting use in the titles of certain books like '*This Freedom!*' The only excuse I can offer for this apparent levity is that one cannot make people think without being provocative and I have chosen this title to provoke discussion on a problem which I consider to be of extreme significance for our country and to possess an urgency all its own. In Part I, some aspects of the problem have been discussed in so far as they bear on the question of human happiness. But in view of its topical as well as intrinsic importance, it may be useful to examine the bases of the present demand for vocational education and to see how far it can be reconciled with the view of education presented in this book.

Let me, at the outset, explain what the problem is and then we can crystallize its assump-

tions and issues and evaluate them for what they are worth. There is at present a general demand amongst the people of this country—the educated and the illiterate, the rich and the poor, those who trouble their heads to think and those who substitute catch-phrases for thought—there is a general demand on the part of all for the provision of vocational education in schools, in colleges and in the universities. Legislative Councils and their committees, the Departments of Public Instruction and their officers, the press and the platform have all laboured over this problem with the object of making education more vocational, introducing all kinds of subjects from book-binding and lock-making to typewriting and aeronautics in schools. There is also a demand for the establishment of special technological institutes, for setting up departments for technical subjects in colleges and universities and for the universities to make their teaching more practical, more directly useful in actual life. One of the many ways in which this demand finds expression is an expectation from the universities that they shall coach students for the various competitive examinations conducted by the Public Services Commission and other less distinguished

and less highly paid bodies, so much so that a university which can, through special coaching arrangements, occasionally push one or two of its students into the sacred ranks of the Indian Civil Service, is deemed to have more than justified its existence and its claim to public respect.*

If we try to analyse the causes which have brought about this remarkable agreement of ideas amongst different types of people, we might be able to throw some light on the situation. This view is the offspring, in the first place, of a general discontent with the fruits of the existing academic and bookish education imparted in schools. Ever since the modern system of education assumed its present form, it has been tending to equip the educated classes for a very limited number of vocations—various administrative and clerical services and a few ‘learned professions.’ As the numbers of educated people, —or, at any rate, people *called* educated—began to grow rapidly and the openings in services could not be multiplied to suit their convenience, discontent with the existing state of affairs, includ-

* See also Chapter VIII, *The Spirit of University Education* for a discussion of this point of view.

ing the educational situation, grew apace. So far one can find no fault with the general attitude of the public but a serious mistake is made when, by a confusion of thought, the existing type of bookish education is taken to be synonymous with 'liberal' education and a clamour is made for 'vocational' education as an antidote. As a matter of fact what they have really mistaken for liberal education is vocational education with a very narrow and circumscribed scope which does not fulfil the expectations that they had entertained about it.

The situation has been further complicated by two new elements. Many factors and forces, some national and others international in their scope, have combined to make the problem of living particularly acute and, competition is much keener than it has ever been before, both amongst individuals and nations. Naturally, therefore, men who are psychologically prone to take short cuts seek to redress the situation by asking for an education which will train them directly for earning a living or make, at least, an appearance of doing so, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to work out the long distance implications and results of their demands. Moreover, the

great changes which have occurred as a result of the Industrial Revolution have almost entirely changed the social, political and economic face of the world and, practically within living memory, many nations have built up their position in the world through the organization and exploitation of their material resources. It strikes the well-wishers of the country as an imperative need that the people should be trained in the various industrial and commercial occupations so that they may contribute to national wealth and material progress and add to its international prestige. Thus, when the appeal of self-interest coincides with national duty and a certain idea has gained strength by being echoed from mouth to mouth, little wonder that the flesh of man has proved too weak to withstand the pressure and people have willingly taken up this cry for a vocational system of education in India.

I have put the case for vocational education as fairly as a definitely prejudiced person can do so—prejudiced in the sense that I do not pretend to that impartiality which often indicates a vacant mind, prejudiced in the sense that it has already come to certain definite conclusions. It is our business now to see to what extent we can subscribe

to this creed. I do not propose to discuss here the problem of technical education as it is imparted in separate technical schools and colleges, because that does not form an integral part of the ordinary system of education. So far as that specialized technical training is concerned, I have only to say that it is undoubtedly important and, if given with due regard to natural aptitudes and the demands of the technical and industrial situation in the country, it will certainly help our material development and is an imperative national duty. Here we are concerned, however, with the inroads which the advocates of technical education are trying to make into the field of school and university education. To what extent are we to subordinate the aims and the curricula of our ordinary education to the demands of the industrialists, the manufacturers and the short-sighted but loud-voiced patriots who want to turn our educational institutions into centres of vocational training? On what grounds can we object to this tendency towards the increased vocationalization of our schools and colleges?

Before dealing with the positive side of this objection, I should like to make it clear that my criticism is *not* based on the assumptions which

generally underlie the objections of 'academic' persons against the introduction of vocational aims in education. I would not, like certain unworldly or perhaps other-worldly people, minimize the importance of the economic element in life. In my opinion a system of education which does not equip the people with the desire and capacity to earn their living and to pull their weight in society, stands utterly condemned. Secondly, I do not believe in any ultimate antithesis between the claims of vocational and liberal education and to my mind there is no greater sin than looking down upon vocational work as being inferior because it often soils the workers' hands in physical labour! To me, in the words of the great German educationist, the late Dr. George Kerschensteiner, vocational education (properly understood) "is the door to the education of man." But that proviso, 'properly understood,' is essential. All education which tends to liberalize the mind—that is, sets it free for greater and more creative activity—is liberal education whether it is given through books or through the stimulus of personality or through the discipline of actual practical work. All intelligent teachers have experienced again and again how

practical work and arts and crafts, which are becoming increasingly popular in progressive schools, often successfully "unlock," in the words of Dr. Percy Nunn, "the finer energies" of a boy whom the ordinary academic approach would have left inert and uninterested. Thus there are immense cultural possibilities in vocational work provided they are properly tapped and exploited, and an education does not cease to be liberal because it finds room for practical and constructive activities within it.

What then is our difference with the rank, out-and-out vocationalist? The difference is very significant and fundamental and it resides in the aim and the point of view underlying the introduction of vocational activities in schools. In so far as they awaken the curiosity and constructive impulses of the youth, appeal to his natural desire 'to come to grips with reality,' and minister to the many-sided development of his personality, which is active as well as cognitive, these activities are welcome. Thus arts and crafts, gardening, agriculture and other great and historic human activities and occupations which have ministered to the fundamental wants of man are rich in elements of educative value, which

can be borrowed by schools profitably in the hope of making school life joyous and meaningful. But their use must be definitely subordinated to the supreme aim of developing the individuality of the educands to its utmost extent. We cannot possibly concede to these vocational features a place in the school curriculum with the sole aim and purpose of turning out farmers, gardeners, carpenters and ironsmiths or clerks, typists and factory labourers. That is *not* the business of the *general* school, which is concerned exclusively with the provision of a broad, general education calculated to awaken interests and stimulate capacity, making the individuals socially intelligent and alert, able to turn their disciplined bodies and minds to the work which the morrow may bring for them. Nor are the universities glorified "coaching centres" to manufacture fodder for the examinations of the Public Services Commission. Their real business is to discover and train the highest talent that may be available in the community along lines which are naturally congenial to it. This release of creative intelligence and the setting up of a vital association between it and the living human problems, making it sensitive and eager and actively

responsive to demands made upon it—this is at once the highest ambition and the truest sphere of university education. I do not advocate this point of view merely in the interest of the older “liberal” or “cultural” values which have, more or less deservedly, fallen into disrepute or gone out of fashion; I stress it also in the interests of an enlightened policy of technical and vocational training. The application of science to industry and the perfection of the technique of mechanical inventions has transformed the nature of the organization of world’s work; it has given it greater mobility and an infinitely increased ‘intellectual content.’ No one can, under modern conditions, play the part of an efficient productive agent—can, in fact, play any part except that of a cog in a machine—unless he has sufficient general training to appreciate the scientific meanings and implications and the social significance of his work and unless he has acquired the non-technical qualities of initiative, resourcefulness, adaptability and judgment. It is nothing but suicidal short-sightedness to try and train young children for specific jobs and callings, for these jobs are constantly on the move and changing their forms and demands, and constantly throw-

ing out of employment all those who have not the capacity to adjust themselves to changes in the situation. Moreover, even when there is comparative stability of work, only those people can rise to the higher stages of their profession who have an alert and sensitive intelligence and a broad vision which is not bounded by the four walls of their daily routine. This applies with even greater force to the centres of higher education, the colleges and the universities, which are being hard-pressed from all sides, not always without success, to prostitute their real mission in the interest of what is termed 'vocational efficiency.' The university is the one place in national life where, immune from the passions and prejudices which warp the judgment of men and from the ignorance which blinds and the insensitivity which kills the true spirit of humanity, the light of creative intelligence can be allowed to play on the living problems of human life and its values can be criticized and appraised. If the universities are forced to become mere appendages of the industrial system we shall lose the only leverage, which is not today, but has within it the promise of becoming an instrument for national regeneration. And if we stick steadfastly to this

ideal of releasing human personality and intelligence for the pursuits of the highest values consciously adopted, we shall not only gain our intellectual riches and cultural heritage; all other things will also be 'added unto us.' We shall find our trained and disciplined young men, with eagerly responsive and awakened minds going into industries and manufacturing concerns and working not as mechanical appendages of the machines that they operate but as ingenious inventors and capable organizers. The *real* problem, both from the intellectual or academic and the vocational point of view, is to raise the general standard of learning, teaching and research in our universities, not with a view to win competitive examinations like cricket matches, but because that is the only way to raise the intellectual as well as the economic status and efficiency of the country. Given a sincere devotion to this central objective, we may rest content that education will certainly fulfil all minor objectives.

The problem, then, as it emerges from this discussion presents itself to us in this form. So far as the schools are concerned, there is no question whatever of making them an adjunct to industry and commerce but, in the words of

Professor Dewey "of utilizing the factors of industry to make school life more active, more full of immediate meaning, more concerned with out-of-school experience." It is from this point of view that we welcome the introduction of vocational features—of movements like the Project method, of handwork, crafts, practical activities and workshops in schools. Those who are destined to finish their education with the school stage will thus be equipped to enter into the various lines of work suited to their capacity, not as blind instruments of an externally controlled activity but as self-directed human beings conscious of the purposes they are working out and with a certain amount of bias towards their future life work. The more fortunate students who have the chance of going to the universities will study and grapple with social and scientific problems in their human context and they will discipline their intellectual powers, and incidentally their character and sympathies, for the much more responsible work that they have to do in later life, and they will be qualified and willing to place their services at the disposal of community welfare in the manner most congenial to them. Many of them will *now* receive